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BAY AREA REPORTER

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My Place was raided by state agents.

State regulators raid SOMA gay bar

by Matthew S. Bajko

State regulators raided the South of Market gay bar My Place last weekend and cited six patrons for lewd conduct. The men are expected to appear in court in January and the bar's liquor license will be reviewed at that time.

In the meantime, the bar will remain open.

Andrew Gomez, the district administrator for the Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control, said Friday night's action is the culmination of a seven-month investigation looking into complaints of sexual acts taking place inside the bar.

"A licensee is responsible to prohibit and prevent certain actions from happening in their establishments less they are subject to violations of their license," he said. "If these acts do take place on the premises, it subjects their ABC license to disciplinary action."

As the *Bay Area Reporter* first reported in May, ABC officials notified My Place that it was under surveillance after the agency received anonymous complaints about drug use and lewd conduct inside the bar. Powerhouse, another bar in SOMA, was also notified that it, too, was under surveillance due to similar complaints. This week Gomez said the Powerhouse case has been closed out and that "we have only gotten recurring complaints with this location," referring to My Place.

According to bar patrons and My Place's manager, undercover agents began handcuffing men around 11:30 p.m. Friday, November 14, after the state regulators witnessed patrons engaging in sex in the bar's bathroom.

Witnesses said the agents cordoned off a back hallway smoking area and questioned the men for more than 30 minutes. One man, who was engaged in oral copulation in the bar's bathroom, said he was cited for

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Gay marriage victory in Massachusetts

Community warned of backlash from the right

by Bob Roehr

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has finessed the issue of gay marriage. It agreed Tuesday that same-sex couples have the right to wed but left it to the state Legislature to determine how that will be carried out. It gave lawmakers 180 days to do so. The approach is similar to one taken by the Vermont court in addressing that same issue.

A decision on the case, known as *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, had been expected months ago, but it was issued on November 18. The 4-3 decision was closer than most observers had anticipated.

The majority opinion, written by Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall, said, "The Massachusetts Constitution affirms the dig-



Wendy Daw, left, and her partner of five years, Belinda Ryan, celebrate Tuesday's Massachusetts court case at the LGBT Community Center. See story on page 3.

nity and equality of all individuals. It forbids the creation of second-class citizens ... the Commonwealth [of Massachusetts] has

failed to identify any constitutionally adequate reason for denying civil marriage to same-sex couples."

Reviewing state marriage law and its implementation, the ruling summarized, "In short, for all the joy and solemnity that normally attend a marriage [the law] governing entrance to marriage is a licensing law."

It rejected the state's argument that procreation is the primary purpose of marriage.

"The judge in the Superior Court endorsed the [procreation] rationale, holding that 'the state's interest in regulating marriage is based on the traditional concept that marriage's primary purpose is procreation,'" the court said. "This is incorrect."

The decision cited "the immeasurable ad-

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Speaking out

25 years after Harvey Milk's murder, Dan White's defense lawyers discuss controversial case

by Cynthia Laird

A quarter century after the assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and gay Supervisor Harvey Milk, the trial of Dan White—the disgruntled ex-supervisor who murdered the two men—still reverberates in the city, particularly in the gay community. Many feel that White, a former policeman and firefighter, got away with murder after he was convicted of voluntary manslaughter in May 1979, based in part on his defense team's groundbreaking trial strategy that saw testimony by psychologists and psychiatrists who told the jury that White suffered from depression and often binged on junk food, including Twinkies. In the ensuing years, much has been made of the so-called Twinkie defense, as well as the mistakes made by pros-



Douglas R. Schmidt



Stephen J. Scherr

ecutor Tom Norton.

On Wednesday, November 12, as part of a weeklong series of events marking the anniversary of the November 27, 1978 slayings of Milk and Moscone, White's two defense attorneys took part in a panel discussion at the University of San Francisco and were fairly candid in talking about their famous former client. White, who served just over five years in state prison for the killings, was paroled to Los Angeles County in January 1984. On October 21, 1985, after returning to San Francisco, White committed suicide by hooking up a garden hose to the exhaust pipe of his car in the garage of his home. He died of carbon monoxide poisoning at the age of 39.

White's attorneys, Douglas R. Schmidt and Stephen J. Scherr, were joined on the stage at USF's Presentation Theatre by Jim Hammer, the openly gay San Francisco assistant district attorney

who was the lead prosecutor in the trial of Robert Noel and Marjorie Knoller, the couple whose dogs attacked and killed lesbian Diane Whipple in 2001. Hammer's participation added much to the discussion, and was a stark reminder of how times have changed in the district attorney's office over the last 25

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Healthy HIVers may not escape viral brain damage

by Zak Szymanski

Thankfully, the news was not as bad as it originally seemed. Nevertheless, the joint research efforts of San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the University of California, San Francisco have revealed that antiretroviral drugs may not prevent brain damage in people with HIV.

"Brain Damage Found in HIV Patients on Antiretroviral Therapy," stated the initial press release from the institutions on November 13. "Researchers have found significant damage in the brains of HIV-positive patients whose viral load is effectively suppressed by antiretroviral therapy."

The release was almost immediately edited to read, "Study finds subtle brain damage in some HIV patients in drug therapy."

Some who received the initial

release believed it to mean that HIV treatments caused extensive brain damage. In actuality, the report's intent was to show that even in patients on HIV medications, brain damage from HIV can occur.

A spokeswoman from SF-VAMC said the word choice of "significant" in the original release reflected a statistical significance, but did not accurately reflect everyday usage of the word. The release was therefore edited so as not to cause alarm or overstate study findings.

The full study, published in the November 14 issue of *NeuroReport*, is one of the first of its kind to compare brain activity and behavioral responses between HIV-negative people and HIV-positive people on antiretroviral treatments.

It has long been known that HIV can penetrate the blood/brain barrier while HIV medications largely cannot. The virus has also been known to produce neurological abnormalities in the nervous system, including the brain, which can progress to AIDS dementia, which before the advent of antiretrovirals afflicted about 20 percent of people with HIV.

Since the widespread usage of HIV treatment, AIDS-related dementia cases have sharply declined. But the drugs do not eliminate the virus, leading researchers to ask whether HIV-related brain damage could still occur in those with suppressed viral loads.

The study included 78 subjects — 39 each of HIV-positive and -negative people — and used a combination of MRI brain imaging, recording of electrical brain activity, and behavioral tests. Whether or not the HIV-positive subjects were virally suppressed, all subjects were healthy with no apparent symptoms of HIV, and all had been on antiretrovirals for at least three months.

The biggest difference in test

results between groups came from the brain wave recordings; during a computer task, HIV-negative participants registered a surge shortly after appearance of the task's first image, while waves remained nearly flat among HIV-positive participants. Lack of response is often an indication of damage to the basal ganglia, according to the study's lead author Linda Chao, Ph.D., "a part of the brain that coordinates motor behavior and one of two brain structures where HIV tends to concentrate."


MRI measurements also showed that the brain's thalamus was smaller in HIV-positive patients.

Results of the behavioral tests were mixed, with no differences recorded on several tests. But three of these tests showed significantly lower scores among HIV-positive patients when it came to attention and mental agility skills, although in everyday life these lapses would probably not be noticed, said Chao.

The study also concluded that where physical distinctions between groups were present without behavioral distinctions, the brain may have the ability to produce alternative neurological pathways, although Chao said, "These alternatives may not be as good."

More research is necessary to follow subjects over a longer period of time — and it is not known whether the damage occurred before patients started HIV medications — but the findings should serve as a warning, according to Chao.

"People are less concerned about contracting AIDS these days," Chao told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "They see people who are HIV-positive who seem to be living normal, healthy lives. But this study shows that more is going on when you look more closely, beneath the surface." ▼



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SF gays toast Mass. ruling

by Matthew S. Bajko

Christmas came early to the Castro this week when hundreds turned up Tuesday night to celebrate the latest gift given to the gay community.

After months of anticipation, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court on November 18 finally released its ruling in favor of gay marriage. The decision is expected to open the door to what many believe will be the first steps toward granting full marriage rights to same-sex couples across the country.

To give thanks to the East Coast justices, 200 people gathered at Harvey Milk Plaza at Castro and Market streets and then marched down to the LGBT Community Center. Along the way they chanted "What do we want? Marriage Equality! When do we want it? Now!"

As they entered the building's lobby, center Executive Director Thom Lynch and his staff welcomed them by passing out Boston baked beans, Boston creme pies, and virgin Cape Cods.

"I am a man from Boston and I am proud to be celebrating my hometown," boasted Lynch. "How the world can change. It can change like that. With one little word. Marriage."

Just two months before, the gay community had gathered at the center to watch former Governor Gray Davis sign AB205 into law. The bill expands the rights of domestic partners and

elevates same-sex relationships to nearly the same level as Vermont's civil unions.

"This is the place where we signed AB205 into law in September," Lynch reminded the crowd. "Tonight, we celebrate the state of Massachusetts for giving the right to same-sex couples to marry. The world is changing!"

For Fremont resident Wendy Daw, and her partner Belinda Ryan, the world can't change fast enough. Ryan, who is from Wales, is here on a work visa which expires next April. The two women have yet to decide what they will do once Ryan is forced to leave the country.

"We have to let the public know it is all about equal rights. We should be treated like everyone else," said Ryan. "That is what we are going to do every day until we have the right to marry in Wendy's home country."

While Great Britain allows for same-sex immigration and is expected to sanction same-sex marriage next year, the women said they would prefer to stay in the United States. Although saddened at the prospect of having to move next year, the couple was all smiles Tuesday night as they partied with friends and thought about how one day their relationship would be legally sanctioned in this country.

"We came out because this is especially poignant for us. Right now, I can't sponsor her when her green card runs out," said Daw, whose parents are from

Massachusetts and whose relatives still reside there. "Any step forward for equality is wonderful and something to celebrate. We will have to plan a visit to grandpa."

"It is one step forward," added Ryan.

Eric Ball, a San Francisco resident and member of Marriage Equality California, also joined in the celebration. He said he has been following the case very closely and wanted to show support for the ruling.

Contemplating all the positive repercussions the ruling could have, Ball said he is also expecting a backlash due to the court's decision.

"With this ruling here you will see any pretense of civility from the religious right evaporate. You will see the same type of vitriol we haven't seen since the civil rights fights," predicted Ball.

Dressed in a Red Sox jersey she borrowed from a colleague, Molly McKay said the ruling will galvanize the religious right to support a constitutional amendment to restrict gay marriages as well as to repeal AB205. But she said the gay community is prepared to fight back.

"I think we are ready," said McKay, MECA co-executive director. "We need to convince 4 million people in California we should protect the rights we won with AB205 and why marriage matters. We can not lose sight of the word marriage. We want full marriage equality and anything else is not equal." ▼



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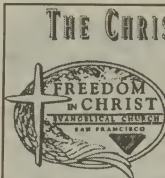
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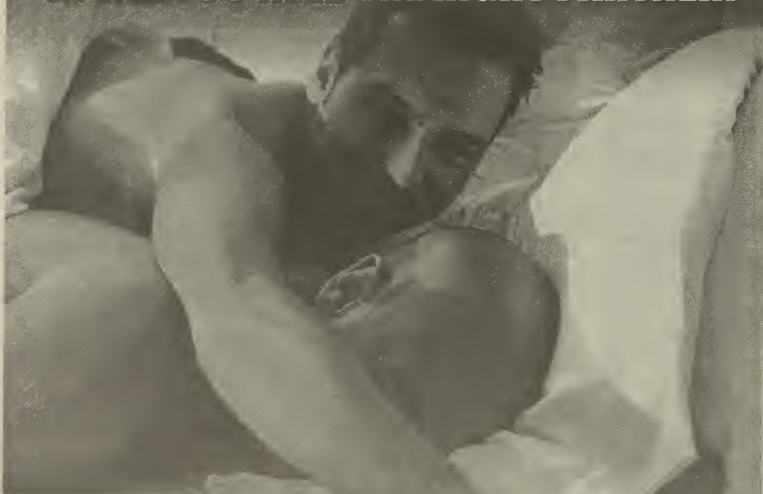
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SFPD reforms TG policies

by Zak Szymanski

Nationwide, police abuse of transgenders has been documented as an ongoing problem, with reported incidents including strip searches to determine genitalia, placement in unsafe holding cells, and assumptions that all transgenders are sex workers.

But on Wednesday, November 12, a unanimous vote by the San Francisco Police Commission put into place one piece of a larger plan to reform procedures around how local transgender suspects are treated. The much needed reform will not only help to ensure the safety and dignity of transgenders in San Francisco, said advocates, but will also serve as a model for other police departments across the country.

"I am proud to live in a city where members of the transgender community feel so empowered," said the openly transgender police Sergeant Stephan Thorne, who was part of the task force that drafted the guidelines. "It is a good thing for citizens to approach the police department when they feel misunderstood. This is how change happens."

The guidelines passed last week call for the training of officers in matters related to the booking, detention, and transportation of transgenders under arrest or suspicion of illegal activities. Most notably, the guidelines stipulate that a person has the right to determine their own gender, regardless of hormonal or surgical status.

Specific procedures outlined by the complete reform package pro-

hibit police from challenging a suspect's gender identity except for legally required citation forms; require officers to address transgenders by their preferred gender identities; and call for the separation of transgenders from the general population in the jail, which is overseen by the Sheriff's Department. Other changes include the elimination of the word "transvestite" — a term often viewed as offensive — from intake forms.

The police reform package is a result of several years of work, beginning with a complaint to the Office of Citizen Complaints that prompted then-OCC Director Mary Dunlap to request the formation of a task force to review and revise procedures. Dunlap died of pancreatic cancer in January, but many advocates at last week's meeting praised her for leading the reform. Advocates also commended City Attorney Dennis Herrera, who as police commission president acted on Dun-

lap's recommendations and passed the resolution to form the task force in 2001.

"I can't tell you how impressive it is to see the work that has been done," remarked Herrera at the meeting. "San Francisco has a history of community policing, and this is the latest incarnation of something that should have occurred long ago."

To his credit, advocates said, Police Chief Alex Fagan took proactive steps to implement pieces of the reform several months ago.

It was Fagan who introduced the topic at last week's meeting, moving the item to the top of the agenda to accommodate the task force members in attendance.

Task force members included Thorne; representatives of Community United Against Violence; representatives of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission; and representatives from commu-

next page ►

Coors boycott renewed

by Zak Szymanski

If you're going to drink Coors, Keystone, Zima, Killian's, or Blue Moon beverages, then you may as well not support LGBT, minority, or labor rights, according to local activists who gathered at Harvey Milk Plaza on Tuesday, November 18.

That's because buying these Coors-brewed products "undoes the work that we do each day to create communities that are anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-sexist, and anti-transphobic," said Tina D'Elia of Community United Against Violence.

The gathering — occurring just hours after a Massachusetts court declared its ban on gay marriages unconstitutional — featured speakers from the Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club; U.C. Berkeley's Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary; CUAV; and Service Employees International Union Local 790, all of whom called for a renewal of old vows to steer clear of Coors beer.

"When we buy products from Coors and other companies that support ultra-conservative agendas," said D'Elia, "we stab ourselves in the back."

Old enough to remember the original Coors boycott of the mid-1970s?

"It never ended," said local labor leader Howard Wallace, who along

with the late Harvey Milk organized the first LGBT efforts against Coors. At the time, said Wallace, the corporation had thwarted unions, refused to hire minorities, and required potential employees to take a lie detector test that asked whether they were homosexual.

Although it has since instituted domestic partner benefits, it never stopped funding organizations that fight against pro-gay and affirmative action laws.

Coors also helps to fund efforts by the "Black Republican frontman for racist causes" and "Uncle Tom" Ward Connerly, according to BAMN. Connerly, a U.C. regent, authored California's recently defeated Proposition 54, an initiative that sought to ban public institutions from collecting racial data for any informational purposes.

A spokeswoman from Connerly's American Civil Rights Institute confirmed that personal donations were received from the now-deceased Joseph Coors, but that the money "was in no way connected to the brewing company."

She also said equating Connerly with an "Uncle Tom" was "old rhetoric."

Although many antigay and racist initiatives have seen defeat, said Wallace, right-wing groups are bound to continue such attempts.

"When they fail, they don't stop," said Wallace, "and neither can we." ▼

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Tessie's needs holiday volunteers

by Zak Szymanski

Those without holiday plans, as well as those whose plans include giving back to the community, are encouraged to donate some of their time this Thanksgiving and Christmas to help people in need.

Tenderloin Tessie's Holiday Dinners, held each year at the First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin Street, at Geary, has for nearly 30 years pre-

pared and served meals to the elderly, disabled, lonely, displaced, and homeless. The dinners – often accompanied by entertainment, and attended by activists and advocates in the gay, leather, and political communities – offer a sit-down experience with a family atmosphere for about 1,000 guests each holiday.

Yet to make these dinners successful, volunteers are needed. Kitchen and set-up shifts run from 4-7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26. Dining room shifts are from 11

a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. And clean-up shifts are from 4-6 p.m. on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Volunteers are welcome to donate as much or as little time as they can.

Tom Basch, president of Tenderloin Tessie's, said that clean-up volunteers are especially needed. Many people enjoy serving dinners because of the human interaction, but "it takes a special person to be able to be there without getting all the glory," said Basch, adding that the duties are relatively easy: scrubbing pots and pans, loading cookware, and helping to return items to a storage facility. "Clean-up volunteers make a big impact and are just as necessary to ensure that people have a great holiday."

For more information, or to register to volunteer, call Basch at (415) 922-0422, or contact Toby at (415) 255-7503. ▼

SFPD TG

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nity based groups such as the Asian and Pacific Islander Wellness Center, Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center, and Proyecto Contra SIDA Por Vida.

The result of the task force collaboration is a three-part proposal that must be adopted by the police department. Last week's Police Commission vote approved just the police training recommendations.

Still to be approved is the task force report; the police department must acknowledge its findings and agree with its recom-

mendations. It is slated to be adopted at the December 3 meeting, according to Marcus Arana of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, although many of the recommendations are already being implemented.

Also awaiting approval are changes to the General Orders, otherwise known as the police department's constitution; the orders will be revised to include gender identity in all nondiscrimination clauses so that complaints against officers may be filed on that basis. This is a longer process, and allows for input from the Police Officers Association before any changes are finalized. ▼

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Gay marriage in the crosshairs

Tuesday's decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court that gay couples have the right to marry under the state Constitution was a major victory for the community, but one that won't see same-sex couples getting marriage licenses in the Bay State or any other state anytime soon. The court's decision, which stopped just short of requiring the state to issue marriage licenses immediately, has already stoked the fires of antigay zealots and has Christian and social conservatives in an uproar.

While the Massachusetts Legislature has 180 days to rewrite the state's marriage laws for the benefit of gay couples, political leaders there are already scrambling to determine options against such a move. Massachusetts' population is heavily Catholic, and the church has been unrelenting in its pressure on lawmakers there and elsewhere to vote against any legislation that would allow gays to marry, or even to provide equal rights for domestic partners. Governor Mitt Romney, a Republican, is adamant that a state constitutional amendment be adopted that would "preserve the institution" of marriage. Never mind that in Massachusetts the earliest that such an amendment could go before voters is 2006, well after the 180-day limit imposed by the court.

A side issue unique to Massachusetts is the decision by openly lesbian state Senator Cheryl Jacques (D) to resign her seat to become executive director of the Human Rights Campaign early next year. Jacques's seat in the state Senate will be up for grabs and could be taken by an antigay candidate, giving conservatives an additional vote on the gay marriage question. We didn't hear from Jacques on Tuesday, but it's unfortunate that she will be leaving elected office just as the real work begins in the Legislature following the court's decision.

What the ruling will almost surely do is spur momentum in Congress for the Feder-

al Marriage Amendment, and that, of course, threatens to bring the issue of gay marriage to the forefront of next year's presidential campaign. The major Democratic candidates who were already on record against gay marriage came out with hasty statements Tuesday reiterating their position in light of the Massachusetts decision, even as most announced opposition to the proposed federal amendment.

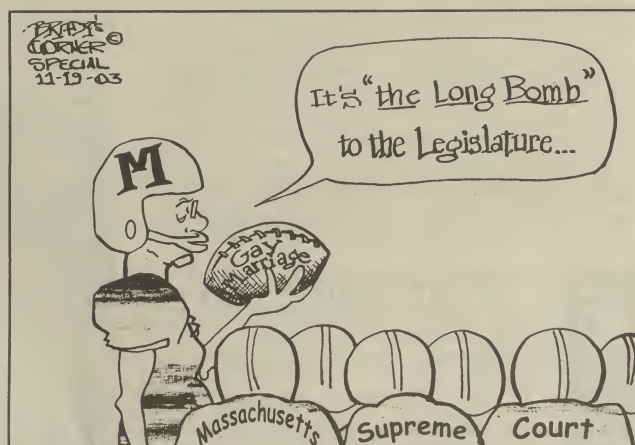
The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force was quick to note the right-wing's assault; and Executive Director Matt Foreman called upon the community to unite to fight the backlash, which started with zeal on cable television Tuesday night. On Fox, Bill O'Reil-

ly's self-described "no-spin zone" was anything but as he railed against same-sex marriage, belittling his guest—a female attorney arguing in support of the Massachusetts decision—and even saying that if gay couples were allowed to wed, then that meant he could marry a duck. We fail to see the connection, other than that O'Reilly is a quack, but his show is one of the highest rated on cable news, and comments like that will only further incite the homophobes.

We fundamentally disagree with those who insist that marriage must be "protected" or "saved." The Massachusetts court was correct in its ruling, but now the real battle begins, not just in Massachusetts but in states across the country. ▼



Editorial



Queer eye for the Green guy

by Michael Alterman, Paul Quirk,
Emily Drennen, Tommi Avicoli
Mecca, Jack Fertig, Grant
Donnelly, Jasmine Elliott and
David Iris Cameron

In the middle of his 2000 race for supervisor, Matt Gonzalez made the dramatic decision to change his party affiliation from Democrat to Green. His closest friends and advisers warned him against it, saying it would cost him the election (it didn't). What readers of this paper may not know is that Gonzalez switched partly over the issue of same-sex marriage. He made this point at the time in an article in the *Bay Guardian*: "I am not going to vote for candidates who oppose gay marriage," he wrote. He repeated it during this year's first mayoral runoff debate on November 11. Unlike the Democrats, Greens unequivocally support queer rights and equality, including same-sex marriage.

Gavin Newsom, Gonzalez's opponent in the mayor's race, has attacked him for his membership in the Green Party, calling the party's positions "extreme" and "radical," and saying they are "out of step" with the views of most city residents. He has even recalled McCarthy-era attacks on liberal ideas by comparing the Green Party platform with Soviet Communism.

We hope that in considering this issue, LGBTIQ voters will remember that Gonzalez's switch was an act of principle, taken at great political risk, and inspired by solidarity with our community and our aspirations toward full equality and inclusion. We believe Matt Gonzalez is the best choice for Democrats who still believe in the ideals of Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, George Moscone, and Harvey Milk.

Many Greens—including Gonzalez—switched parties because we felt the Democratic Party had abandoned its commitment to its own core values. The Green Party embodies many values shared by Democrats in San Francisco—social justice, civil liberties, feminism, environmentalism, and good

government. Our policies are based on principle, not determined by the latest opinion poll or sold to the highest bidder. What we call our "Ten Key Values" governs every decision that we make. Our party takes no money from corporations. Gonzalez is the only member of the Board of Supervisors who does not maintain a campaign "slush fund" between elections.

Greens and Democrats in San Francisco may disagree on political strategy, but we are united in our commitment to a set of shared beliefs. We oppose the war in Iraq, the Patriot Act, and Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy. We favor universal health care, improved public education, and democratic electoral reforms.

We believe it is Gavin Newsom, not Matt Gonzalez, who is out of step with the views of most San Franciscans. Newsom may hold liberal positions on social issues,

but on economic issues he acts more like a Republican than a Democrat. He has consistently sided with the interests of big business and the very wealthy over those of working and middle-class people. Newsom is a member of the Democratic Leadership Council, which has led the party's rightward shift. And he is a protégé of Mayor Willie Brown, whose administration has been marred by scandal, and who has presided over a boom and bust cycle that changed the character of our city and ended in fiscal crisis. To elect Newsom mayor would be to empower the worst tendencies of the Democratic establishment, and continue the reign of a corrupt political machine.

As supervisor, Newsom consistently voted with Mayor Brown, opposing attempts to rein in the corruption and patronage of Brown's administration. He voted against good government reforms of the Planning and Police commissions. He opposed cuts to wasteful patronage jobs.

Gonzalez, on the other hand, has been an advocate for clean government and the interests of working San Franciscans. As su-

pervisor, he fought corruption at the San Francisco Housing Authority and expanded whistleblower protections for government workers. He voted to cut Brown's patronage employees, and as mayor would eliminate these upper management positions, saving the city millions of dollars. Under his leadership as president, the Board of Supervisors produced a balanced budget that doubled money for schools and protected vital social services during a time of fiscal crisis.

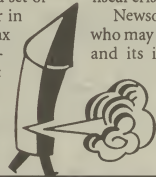
Newsom is clearly trying to scare voters who may be unfamiliar with the Green Party and its ideas. He has even invoked the specter of Ralph Nader and the 2000 presidential election debacle in Florida. We hope that readers of this paper will see the irrelevance of that argument. The mayor's race is nonpartisan, and voting for Gonzalez will not throw the election to a right-wing

Republican. Newsom is trying to distract voters for an obvious reason: it is he and the political machine he represents that are out of step with the majority of San Franciscans.

Over the remaining days of the election we are likely to see a host of big-name Democrats descend on San Francisco to prop up Newsom's candidacy. We will be told to vote for Newsom because he is a Democrat and his opponent is a Green. But the issues in this election are too important for us to focus on party labels.

The choice in the mayor's race is not between the Green Party and the Democratic Party. It is between Matt Gonzalez, a Green who has a record of fighting for Democratic values at their best, and Gavin Newsom, a nominal Democrat who represents the party at its worst. Don't be fooled by Newsom's scare tactics. Please join us in voting for Matt Gonzalez on December 9. ▼

The authors are members of the San Francisco Lavender Greens. For more information, visit www.sfgreenparty.org.



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

Thanks from a dad

To all of the friends of Mike Salinas: This is long overdue but there was a lot to deal with. I would like to thank all of you who expressed your love and admiration for my late son, Mike. The calls, cards, letters, and personal visits from the many to express their condolences and offer comfort and support were most heart warming and much appreciated.

His memory will be sustained by the many who loved and admired him. Thank you again.

Rick Salinas
San Francisco

Gonzalez and open government

It is interesting that mayoral candidate Matt Gonzalez is supporting Chris Daly's disrespectful move of appointing two PUC commissioners while he played acting mayor for the day. I wonder how Mr. Gonzalez would feel if he were mayor and the person he appointed "mayor for the day" while he was out of town did the same to him?

What Mr. Daly did was disrespectful to not only the mayor and all his elected peers, but to all of the people of San Francisco. Now we have Mr. Gonzalez supporting this action of disrespect. Ironically, Mr. Gonzalez often talks of open government and process, two things obviously missing from the Daly appointments.

Mr. Gonzalez could show some honesty if he were to use the campaign slogan "Do as I say, not as I do." But even then, the voters are smart enough to know, the Gonzalez/Green machine is not one to be trusted.

Jimmy Legg
San Francisco

Leno, Leal mayoral endorsement

It's no surprise to anyone that Assemblyman Mark Leno and Treasurer Susan Leal have endorsed Gavin Newsom for mayor. These are three candidates who all gained office through appointment, whose key expertise is channeling political money, and who are lauded by the mainstream press as "competent" even as they have locked the bloated San Francisco budget into huge structural deficits while failing to cover basic priorities, such as mental health outpatient services. When you hear Newsom rail against failed homeless policies and city budget problems, do not forget that those failed policies are his and those budget deficits were crafted by Mayor Brown in a time of plenty with his and Leno's very vocal support. If that's competence, let's have some incompetence, please.

Mike Karpa
San Francisco

Gonzalez is the smart choice

I have been living in the Castro for four years and have seen many of my friends, all hard working lower-middle income gay men and women, forced to leave because of reckless housing policies that Gavin Newsom will continue if he becomes Brown's successor at City Hall. Matt Gonzalez is the only choice for mayor on December 9 that can make San Francisco friendly to both the upper-middle class and lower-middle income folks. Without a shift away from Newsom/Brown housing policies, San Francisco's diversity will be in jeopardy. Vote Gonzalez!

Panos Philandrinis
San Francisco

Our wager with Wayne

On the Sunday before our recent November 4 election, I was canvassing for Matt Gonzalez outside the Castro Muni station when the esteemed Wayne Friday happened by. Rink, the photographer, and Bob Meslinsky joined us in an interesting conversation about the political scene and Mr. Friday made the proclamation that Matt Gonzalez would most definitely not make the runoff against Gavin Newsom, predicting an eventual third or possibly fourth place finish. Feeling bold that day as he was handing out Kamala Harris flyers, Mr. Friday then took the next step and told us that, "If Gonzalez makes the runoff, I'll take you all out to lunch." Though I obviously share different political views than Mr. Friday, I imagine him to be a man of his word. With that in mind, please remind him that Rink, Bob, and I are getting hungry and are looking forward to lunch. And should Matt not become our next mayor, then the next lunch is on me.

Quintin Mecke
San Francisco

Matt Gonzalez for San Francisco

As a member of the LGBTI community with almost 20 years of residency in San Francisco I have never been so excited about a mayoral election. Matt Gonzalez is the first individual to capture my attention as a person of substance and integrity whom I believe has the ability and desire to invigorate, preserve and protect all that we cherish about this amaz-

ing city and its people. Like many, I do not want to see the keys to my beloved city handed over to a puppet who speaks in empty jargon and rhetoric. But the sentiment "Anyone but Gavin" is not what underlies my support for Matt. I would vote for Matt Gonzalez no matter who his opponent because he is perhaps the best thing this city has seen since Harvey Milk.

Sara Anahid Meghrouni
San Francisco

Gonzalez good for the Castro

Watching *The Times of Harvey Milk* the other night at the Castro Theatre was a bittersweet experience. In it I witnessed gay people passionately supporting a progressive gay candidate. It was a time when the Castro was still a place where many different types of people lived and when gay residents were feeling empowered to fight for all disenfranchised people. Cut to the Castro 25 years later, now that it has been tightly tied up with a rainbow ribbon, many successors to the neighborhood no longer support progressive politics or the rights for others. Who wants to be pandered by a homeless gay kid on the way to Diesel or have to see anyone who doesn't reflect their narrow perception of the "community" while brunching at Harvey's (how ironic)? At this point the Newsom signs are waving high and proud along with the rainbow flag.

It's clear to me that Matt Gonzalez is the only candidate who can effectively address the issues for all of us and keep this city a true diverse rainbow rather than just a hollow symbol. I would strongly recommend that everyone heed Harvey Milk's words of wisdom and "Come out, just come out" and vote for Matt Gonzalez on December 9.

Dennis Conroy
San Francisco

Mayoral race a classic battle

The San Francisco mayor's race is a classic battle of downtown versus neighborhoods. Gavin Newsom represents big business, big government, and downtown developers. These guys brought us the dot-com boom. Skyrocketing rents tore up communities, closed businesses, and forced longtime residents out of San Francisco. Then the bust gave us soaring unemployment and service cuts. Neighborhoods lost both ways.

Matt Gonzalez stands for our communities, not for boom-and-bust developers. He will make sure Third Street development benefits Bayview residents, instead of pushing them out. He will keep unwanted chain stores out of the Richmond and Sunset. He will meet regularly with neighborhood leaders and sponsor community assemblies to bring people together and solve problems. He will make San Francisco neighborhoods cleaner, greener, and more livable for all.

David M. Spero
San Francisco

Matt's his guy

Everywhere I go it seems that people are obsessed with the appearances of our two mayoral candidates. Matt the dreamy bohemian, Gavin the cute frat boy. Shouldn't we be more concerned with "the issues"? Maybe not.

I read the paper, I've looked at their Web sites, and last week I listened to the first radio debate. The more I come to know, the more I realize how much I really could have learned about the issues by simply looking at their pictures.

Under Matt's disheveled hair his face impossibly displays a simultaneously neutral, relaxed, and attentive expression. This almost meditative appearance is paralleled by his approach to the issues. He seems able to find graceful solutions to complex problems without getting stressed out. His fiscally responsible proposal of ramping up the education budget gradually over several years illustrates this ability as does his proposal for limited-equity long-term affordable housing.

Alluring pictures of Gavin seem always to offer the same smile and rigid hair. We sense his ability to control both his face and the comb. The structural approach revealed by his appearance seems paralleled by his tendency to force mismatched solutions onto complex urban problems. He proposes bringing corporate executives into our public schools. He offers police action to the street-bound ill and homeless.

I guess over the last few months I have been focusing on the issues when I could have just looked at the pictures. Gavin is cute, but Matt's my guy.

Bill Harrison
San Francisco

Matt cares about LGBT issues

I am a gay man who has lived in San Francisco for 15 years. I am one of thousands who have flocked to this city because of its commitment to tolerance and humanism. Mayoral candidate Matt Gonzalez is getting particularly negative coverage in your paper ("Is

next page ►

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Mailstrom

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the Milk bust a bust?", "Gonzalez's leadership," Editorial, November 13) and I for one would like to point out one of the things that made Mr. Gonzalez decide to switch to the Green Party, their official key issue on social justice which specifically covers gay citizen rights:

"Social justice and equal opportunity. All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law."

I know that this is one of the issues that attracted Gonzalez to switch. I also know that most progressive Democrats will agree with this stand – especially gay Democrats. He was also one of the most outspoken supervisors who voted for giving benefits to transgender city employees. He has said that this was a vote he is most proud of.

Gavin Newsom may put up bigger signs in the Castro but Matt Gonzalez actually goes there and engages people because he cares about our issues. I have not seen this reported in your recent election coverage. Please show both sides to this election! Gay San Franciscans who read your paper have a right to know.

Peter Jacques
San Francisco

Voting for Gonzalez

With the sudden flurry of pro-Newsom editorials in your paper, I feel it my duty to come forth as a pro-Gonzalez supporter who is queer.

I am concerned about the recent tone of editorials and reader submissions painting a portrait of Mr. Newsom as the best candidate for the interests of the gay community. From my perspective, both candidates are equally gay-sensitive. There appears to be no reason to favor one candidate over the other on gay-related issues.

However, I do feel that your paper neglects to point out the benefits of Mr. Gonzalez over Mr. Newsom with issues relative to equality, housing, environment, effectiveness, class issues, honesty, character, and conflict-of-interest. Following are my reasons.

1. Housing. From February 2001 through July 2003, Newsom consistently voted against the interests of tenants (a majority of San Francisco, and also of the queer community). In April 2001, Newsom voted to allow the evictions of seniors under the Ellis Act – also voting against a resolution which urged the state Legislature to amend the Ellis Act to prevent the eviction of senior tenants. In August 2001 and March, 2002, Newsom voted against requiring developers to include more affordable housing. In contrast, Supervisor Gonzalez supports tenant rights, rent control, and affordable housing. He opposes the weakening and bending of laws protecting tenants and low-income families.

2. Neighborhood character and self-determination. Supervisor Gonzalez is opposed to the intrusion of chain stores into neighborhoods against the will of the residents. Newsom, however, voted against controls on "big box projects" (think: Ikea and Home Depot) and specifically voted against neighborhood notice and approval requirements.

3. Public interests. In July 2001, Newsom voted against public power and voted to prevent the voters from deciding on the ballot whether or not the residents of San Francisco should have public power. In contrast, Supervisor Gonzalez supports public power.

4. Conflict-of-interest. Newsom's apron-strings are so laden with self-interest and tied to developers that he has had to recuse himself 152 times from voting on key issues since 1997. In stark contrast, Supervisor Gonzalez has recused himself from voting a total of five times.

5. Class issues. No one wants to see homelessness. Supervisor Gonzalez supports the revamping of resources already in place, the use of SROs and transitional housing. Newsom, however, just wants the homeless to disappear. Newsom's Care Not Cash policy (and attitude) offers no care.

6. The basics. Matt Gonzalez supported Proposition H (police reform) and Proposition L (minimum wage). Gavin Newsom opposed Proposition H and Proposition L. Matt Gonzalez supports bicycling as an alternative to driving. Gonzalez opposed the construction of a parking garage under the Music Course in Golden Gate Park, while Newsom supported the construction of a parking garage that would destroy historic pedestrian walkways. I endorse the candidate who promotes the use of bicycles as an alternative to fossil-fuel burning vehicles and keeps our city parks from being further abused and destroyed for the use of vehicles. I support the candidate that realizes the need to oversee our police department, especially in light of recent police misconduct. I support the candidate who recognizes that those who earn less than \$7 per hour cannot afford to live in San Francisco.

As a 15-year resident of the Bay Area and an 11-year resident of San Francisco, as a gay man, as a working-class artist, a 10-year veteran of the SF Unified School District, and as a resident of the Mission District, I challenge the gay community to think beyond the rainbow flag. I ask the readers of this paper to examine their own belief system and question what the oft-banded word "equality" actually means to them – it's more than merely being able to hold your partner's hand in public, folks.

It's about affordable housing, assisting those in need (and helping them get back on their feet), and providing equal services to all neighborhoods (and not merely those with higher incomes). I would ask the readers to also examine the phrase "quality of life" and realize that living in concert with our environment is essential to the long-range sustenance of San Francisco. Finally, I would ask each reader to examine the logistics of this mayoral race and ask him- or herself which candidate is best equipped to reassemble and repair this city after the eight years of damage and havoc created by Willie Brown. There is only one choice here – and it's not the one who was appointed by Brown. It's not the one who sells wine and runs a chain of restaurants. It's not the one with ties to the Getty family, big business, or developers. The obvious choice, the honorable choice, the sensible choice for mayor is Matt Gonzalez.

Joe Collins (aka Trauma Flintstone)
San Francisco

Democrat for Gonzalez

I plan to vote for Matt Gonzalez. I'm a professional gay man who has been a renter in San Francisco for seven years (five of those in the Castro) and I want a mayor who understands the needs of renters. The majority of people actually doing the work in this city are renters. I want a mayor who is both pro-business and pro-neighborhood. Matt has demonstrated a commitment both to neighborhoods and to developing a thriving economy. I want a mayor with a heart, not somebody who buys up multiple properties and evicts elderly women who are long-term residents. And finally, I want somebody who has had to work hard to get where they are. I can't respect a politician whose career was enabled by family influence, patronage, and massive family wealth.

Warren Longmire
San Francisco

Don't blame Canada!

Much heat, but little light, has been seen in recent LGBT press coverage of the falling out between the board of the Gay Games and local organizers of the 2006 games in Montreal, Canada.

First a little background on where I'm coming from. Although I live in the USA, I was born in Canada and was the emcee of the opening and closing ceremonies of the 1990 Gay Games held in Vancouver, Canada. I also have produced major events for the LGBT community, including the main stages for our first three Marches on Washington.

I quit the fourth March in 2000, not because of the controversy raised by some professional commentators, but because I had a self-selected board, the majority of whom wanted to micromanage the people who did the actual work, without raising money, or participating in the actual work. So, whether a board is "all volunteer" or not, the audacity of wanting the absolute power to control the Games, to micromanage them without contributing anything but the "name" Gay Games, for an outrageous sum of money, is ludicrous.

The Federation of Gay Games board wants a \$1 million (Canadian) fee from the local organizers, but for what? A board that does not raise money, and isn't even professional enough to collect production and participant information from past Games, and thus isn't even in a position to contribute valuable information for future organizers. This institutional myopia is particularly irresponsible when you consider that the last several outings – Vancouver, New York, Amsterdam, and Sydney – have all lost money, with local organizers left holding the bag.

Layer on top of these policies a particular international notoriety that, thanks to the actions of the current president and Congress, people in the USA have increasingly gained. We are viewed here in the USA (and yes, I am a citizen now) as always wanting control. Where is the sensitivity toward other countries' decisions? If the Federation of Gay Games was not responsible for raising the money, nor for the losses, what gives them the right to demand control of the decisions?

The workers who do the work should have the power. The people who raise and are responsible for the money and the debts, should have the power. Montreal walked away, and took their power. Why? Because, they have all of the responsibility, and will be doing all of the work. The two should go hand in hand.

Congratulations Montreal. I will see you in 2006!

Robin Tyler, National Co-Chair
DontAmend.com.

POLITICS

Schwarzenegger takes over Sacramento

by Wayne Friday

Republicans are now in control of the governor's office in the nation's largest, most populous state and the man at the wheel is an Austrian-born body-builder-turned-movie actor-turned-politician. **Arnold Schwarzenegger** took the oath of office as California's 38th governor Monday, November 17 in a somewhat abbreviated ceremony that garnered a lot of attention and loads of international press, but lacked the usual inaugural balls, celebrations, and winner-take-all fireworks.

Now that fellow Hollywood friends such as **Jamie Lee Curtis** and **Vanessa Williams** have quickly departed the cow town capital city and are back in Tinseltown, the champagne toasts are hopefully over, and the bigger-than-life celebrity Governor Schwarzenegger must now deal with a state government otherwise dominated by Democrats and a budget crisis that some say could balloon to \$65 billion by the end of his term.

A crowd rivaling a presidential inauguration — reportedly as many as 8,000, plus nearly 800 reporters from around the world — witnessed Schwarzenegger take the oath of office on the west steps of the state Capitol Monday. Apparently not wanting to pass up the opportunity to help his movie career, Schwarzenegger and the movie studios last week just happened to release the DVD of Schwarzenegger's blockbuster film *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* and hyped the reissue of *Pumping Iron*, the bodybuilding documentary that made a star out of the heavily-accented Austrian.

After Schwarzenegger took the oath of office he reportedly met with legislative leaders of both parties to tell them that he would immediately call a special session of the Legislature for Tuesday. The movie-star hype is over, the carefully scripted campaign is a thing of the past, and if Schwarzenegger can just stop repeating those damned movie lines ("I'll be back," "Terminate big government," etc.) he might possibly turn out to be an effective chief executive. We will have to wait and see.

Incidentally, according to Secretary of State **Kevin Shelley**, a whopping 755,575 voted for the recall but didn't bother to vote on the second part of the ballot — the question of selecting a replacement candidate. Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** — hell, I still don't like the sound of it, but be that as it may, it's a reality, so let's wish him well.

Politics and people

The Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club, which had been squarely behind **Susan Leal** in the November 4 mayoral election, voted last week by an overwhelming 110-10 margin to endorse **Gavin Newsom** for mayor; the club had previously endorsed **Kamala Harris** for district attorney.

Meanwhile, the Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic (?) Club has



The San Francisco chapter of Log Cabin Republicans held its annual dinner November 15 and honored longtime member Chris Bowman, second from right, with the Ronald Kershaw Lifetime Achievement Award. Others who attended the event included out lesbian San Diego County District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis, right, and from left, Jeff Bissiri, state LCR chair, and Paul Lynd, president of the San Francisco chapter.

thrown its endorsement (reportedly by a very divided vote) to Green Party nominee **Matt Gonzalez**, which brings many to ask the question as to when the Milk Club will do the honest thing and legitimately change its name to the Green Party LGBT Club since they more often support Green candidates and pass over Democratic nominees, even to the point of refusing an endorsement of Kevin Shelley for secretary of state last year.

U.S. Senator **Dianne Feinstein** (D-California), a previous supporter of **Bill Fazio**,

last week enthusiastically threw her support to D.A. candidate **Kamala Harris**.

More bad news for the incumbent, **Terence Hallinan**, in that the S.F. Labor Council, which had twice previously endorsed his campaigns, decided last week not to endorse him this time around.

Ex-Governor **Gray Davis**, sometimes known as a cautious and moderate politician, truly took a leadership role on gay-rights issues while in office; it was one area in which Davis consistently agreed to bold changes. Among the things Davis did while in office was sign AB205 (domestic partners) sponsored by Assemblywoman **Jackie Goldberg** (D-Los Angeles) that provides many new rights and responsibilities to people registered as domestic partners, including the right to child custody, financial support, and transfer of real estate. That law takes effect in January 2005.

Davis also signed AB196 by Assemblyman **Mark Leno** (D-San Francisco) that protects transgender people from job and housing discrimination.

While governor, Davis also signed into law AB17 by Assemblywoman **Christine Kehoe** (D-San Diego) that bans a state agency from contracting with a company that grants benefits to the spouses but not the domestic partners of its employees; the law applies to contracts of \$100,000 or more per year.

Gray Davis also appointed 10 openly gay and lesbian judges, the first such appointments in 16 years, following previous GOP governorships.

Many Democrats think one of

Governor Schwarzenegger's better appointments was that of former Contra Costa County Supervisor **Sunne McPeak**, a Democrat, to become secretary of business, transportation, and housing.

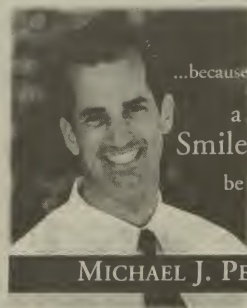
Friday, December 5 is the filing deadline for prospective Republican challengers to announce as candidates to take on U.S. Senator **Barbara Boxer** (D-California). Representative **David Dreier** (R-Covina) has been making noises as though he might run against Boxer, but this column is betting he passes it up (with only political insiders knowing the real reason why) but look for former Secretary of State **Bill Jones** to file, along with former U.S. Treasurer **Rosario Marin**, former Los Altos Mayor **Toni Casey**, and GOP Assembly Caucus Leader **Tony Strickland** (R-Moorpark). A recent Field Poll, incidentally, shows the hard-campaigning Boxer taking out any of the possible GOP challengers. As to one-on-one matchups with Boxer, the latest Field Poll shows: Boxer 48 percent versus Jones 34 percent; Boxer 50 percent versus Strickland 28 percent; Boxer 50 percent versus Marin 27 percent; and Boxer 49 percent versus Casey 26 percent.

Meanwhile, the Boxer re-election effort, already well under way, last week released the names of 164 Latino and Latina leaders statewide that have endorsed her re-election, including L.A. and S.F. City Attorneys **Rocky Delgadillo** and **Dennis Herrera**, respectively; San Jose Mayor **Ron Gonzales**; and dozens of local elected Latino/Latina leaders, members of the state legislature, and members of the California Democratic congressional delegation.

Assemblywoman **Christine Kehoe**, a popular lesbian Democrat from San Diego, will run for the state Senate next year from San Diego's 39th District, but will face a tough campaign from perennial GOP candidate **Larry Stirling**; Kehoe is definitely the superior candidate in that one.

More endorsements: Treasurer (and former mayoral candidate) **Susan Leal** and Assemblyman **Mark Leno** endorsed **Gavin Newsom** for mayor Saturday; D.A. candidate **Kamala Harris** picked up the endorsements of Assemblyman **Leland Yee** (D-San Francisco), Assessor **Mabel Teng**, Supervisor **Bevan Duffy**, and popular longtime Sheriff **Mike Hennessey**.

And how was your week? ▼



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Folsom money presented



The board of Folsom Street Events, which produces the Up Your Alley Fair, Folsom Street Fair, and Magnitude, announced November 13 that numerous local groups would receive a portion of the \$246,000 that was raised at all three events. This year's benefiting organizations include Visual Aid, Bay Area Young Positives, the Black Coalition on AIDS, the Destination Foundation, Dolores Street Community Services, Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco, Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services, Pets Are Wonderful Support, the Positive Resource Center, Project Open Hand, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and the Stop AIDS Project.

My Place

◀ page 1

lewd conduct. The man, who would not give his real name and referred to himself as Nick, said some of the men were also led onto the roof of the bar, located at 1225 Folsom Street.

"That particular night was really cold. I was shirtless and another guy was shirtless. I didn't have the presence of mind to complain about being cold. I was freezing, he was freezing, others with shirts on were complaining. We were up there at least 30 minutes in the cold," said Nick, who contacted the B.A.R. this week.

He said he was given a citation to appear before San Francisco Superior Court on January 20. A regular of My Place, Nick said he never thought he could be legally held liable for having sex at the bar. Now, he faces misdemeanor charges.

"I feel awful. My Place is my favorite bar. I feel really terrible; it is a bar which attracts a wide variety of people. It just is a really great bar to just hang out," said Nick. "If the cops are going to be in there, it's like, Jesus Christ. I don't think the cops should be in there. I never thought that nor did I ever imagine it."

While he is worried about what may happen to him in court, Nick said he does not believe he is the focus of the ABC's actions. Instead, he said the focus of Friday's raid is the bar itself.

"I don't think I am the one they are after. They asked at least six or seven questions about the staff of the bar. Did anybody on staff know what goes on back here? Anyone come back here? Did staff know what was going on back there?" he said he was asked. "I am sure the bar will survive, however, it is going to go through another little thing and people are, like, afraid now to even, like, kiss and hold hands. It's kind of like you are at a party and your parents come home and everybody turns the light on and your behavior changes."

For now, My Place's management is cooperating with the ABC and is hopeful it will not face a suspension of its liquor license.

"They are giving us a chance to change, to prove that yeah, this time we really are getting rid of the people who just come in there to have sex," said the bar's manager, who goes by the name Cip. "We were doing that. They were restricted from entering the bar. It is probably the same people who wrote these letters."

Cip, who has managed the bar

for 10 years, said the ABC investigators have told him they will be back to see if the bar is still having the same incidents occur.

"It is a bar not a sex club. If they do have sex in the bar or any SOMA bar they will get arrested," said Cip.

As of last Saturday, the bar is now employing people to ensure no one engages in sex in its bathroom.

"Over the next few months we are aggressively going to make sure no one has sex in that bar nor anyone does drugs. Saturday we hired somebody to be the sex police in there and make sure no one had sex there or was smoking pot there," said Cip.

ABC investigators first visited the bar on April 19 and turned up no evidence to support the complainants' claims. At the time, the bar was given verbal warning it was being watched by the ABC. Then in July, the ABC received another complaint that people were smoking marijuana and engaging in sex acts at the bar. Still no action against the bar or its patrons was taken at that time.

Since April, Cip said he has been trying to change patrons' behaviors. Earlier this year the bar had written "no sex allowed" messages in its bathroom and had notified patrons not to have sex or do drugs. However, Cip said he did not feel the need to post someone in the bathroom all night.

"Honestly it is just like I have been saying forever: we are changing things at the bar. We see people having sex, we tell them to stop. They don't believe us and this is what happens," said Cip. "We didn't make sure to go into the bathroom. I am not going to run in there to see if you are pissing or stroking."

This fall Gomez said his agency received a phone call from a man who reported numerous friends of his had visited the bar and contracted syphilis from having sex there. Gomez said the man was outraged that the ABC and police department had neglected to take any action against the bar despite receiving several complaints.

"He stated he was gay and had filed a complaint against the bar and that if we didn't act he would contact the governor," said Gomez. "He said we wouldn't make any enforcement actions because of politics within the gay community."

Following the phone call, ABC investigators then went back to the bar in September and took photographs of people engaging in oral sex. In October, ABC agents returned to My Place and witnessed patrons engaged in oral

copulation and masturbation inside the premises, "again with house knowledge," said Gomez.

In November, Gomez said investigators found patrons of the bar "engaged in anal intercourse and oral copulation on the premise." He said agents finally decided after that point to hand out citations last Friday night.

The lewd conduct citations are similar to traffic violations, said Gomez. The men must appear before the court where they could face fines or community service. They will not have to register as sex offenders.

As for My Place, Gomez said he will be meeting with the licensee, Janice Buxton, sometime in mid-December or early January. He said he apprised her of the situation Monday and will contact her once his agents complete their reports.

"I will call the licensee to discuss options in settling this particular matter," said Gomez. "I am not sure what the penalty assessment would be until I have the reports and review them. It could be anything from a 30-day suspension to revocation of a license."

Cip maintains that he has tried to move My Place beyond its seedy past and reputation for allowing bathroom sex. He said he has 86-ed people from the bar for engaging in sexual activities after being warned not to, and starting this week, the bar will have a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to public sex and drug use.

"We have to make sure that doesn't happen anymore. Some people come here only to have sex. They can go to Blow Buddies, they can go to Mack, they can go to hell for all I care," he said. "It is not a sex club. It is a bar and I have a business to run. We have a core group of regulars. They like the bar. They like the music. They like to hang out with their friends here and for them it is not fair. We have had this horrible reputation for so long and it is nothing like it used to be."

Mixed reaction

The raid on Friday night has sparked mixed reactions from My Place's customers. One man who asked not to be identified said he hopes the incident will change men's behavior at the bar.

"I am sick and tired of guys going in there having sex because their lovers are out of town or they are on the down-low," said the man, using the term for men who have sex with men but do not identify as gay.

Another patron of the bar, Tim Brace, said he is outraged that the ABC would target gay men and said he has no problem with men

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"Our city has long been a haven for LGBT people from all over the country and the world. This city is special to me, too. Like you, I want to make San Francisco livable again."

Matt

Matt Gonzalez

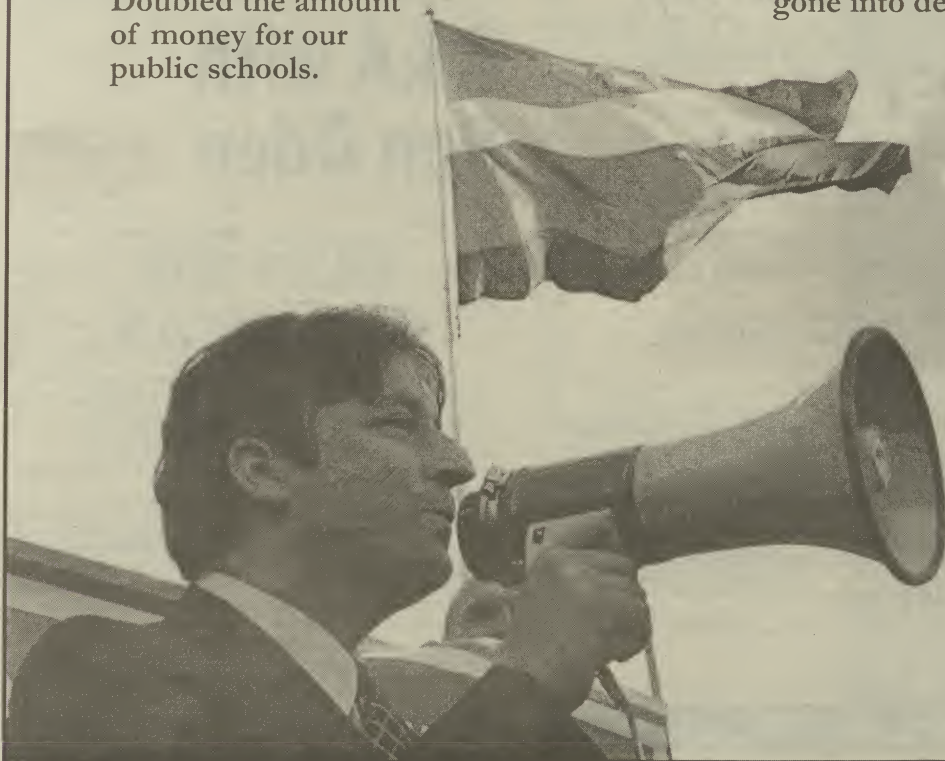
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Matt Gonzalez using Harvey Milk's bullhorn at a rally in the Castro on Nov. 16. It was presented to him by Phyllis Burke, an activist who marched alongside Harvey.

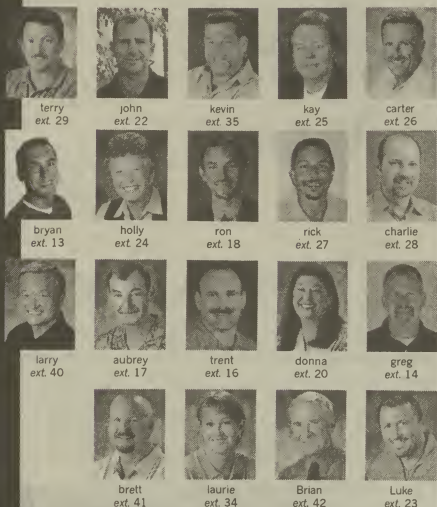
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Gay black mayor elected in Palm Springs

'Lavender Sweep' in desert city

by Ed Walsh

Palm Springs will make history next week when a LGBT majority will be sworn in to its city government and a gay African American man will take the reins of the mayor's office.

"It's the second lavender sweep in the state of California," said former San Francisco and current Palm Springs resident and political adviser Jean Harris, reflecting on the so-called lavender sweep in San Francisco in 1990. That election swept in gay candidates Carole Migden and Roberta Achtenberg to the Board of Supervisors and Tom Ammann to the school board.

In the November 4 election, Palm Springs voters replaced incumbent Mayor Will Kleindienst, 50, with Ron Oden, 53, an eight-year veteran of the Palm Springs city council. Oden is the city's first gay mayor and city's first black mayor. About a third of the Palm Springs population (42,803) is estimated to be gay but the African American population is only about 2 percent.

Oden's election has generated international media attention. After he spoke with the *Bay Area Reporter* he was scheduled to be



Mayor-elect Ron Oden

interviewed later that day by France's largest newspaper, *Le Monde*, and by the *Washington Times*. He said he has mixed feelings about the headlines that refer to him as the "first openly gay African-American mayor."

"I don't resent it because I am African American and I am gay," he explained. "It's part of who I am. However, the way it's presented is that somehow you don't see a person in that. You spend a lot of years developing who you are and that title or partial title doesn't cover it."

Oden explained that his message resonated with voters because he represented change. Like another famous Palm Springs mayor, the late Sonny Bono, Oden was voted into office on a pro-business platform.

The other winning gay candidates, Steve Pougnet and Ginny Foat, also took a pro-business stance. The Palm Springs City Council consists of five members, including the mayor who is considered the fifth council member.

Harris, a former aide to ex-San Francisco Supervisor Harry Britt

and a former executive director of Equality California, then known as the California Alliance for Pride and Equality, worked as a strategist with all three campaigns, she said.

Pougnet, 40, is a real estate agent and the former vice president for the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. He lives with his partner of 11 years, Christopher Green. He is chairman of the citizens committee of the Palm Springs Community Development Block Grant Program and serves on the AIDS Assistance Program's board of directors.

Foat, 62, is a former president of the California National Organization for Women and was the founder of Legal Advocates for Women in San Francisco in the mid-1980s. Currently, she is vice president of operations for O'Leary and Associates Inc., a political phone management company, and is the owner and corporate officer of GBG Palm Springs Inc., a property management firm. She has many years of volunteer work with various HIV/AIDS boards and commissions, and served as co-chair on the board of the Palm Springs Gay and Lesbian Center. She lives with her domestic partner.

Oden said voters didn't support him or the gay City Council candidates because of their sexual orientation. He said people voted for change and against a government that was perceived to be unfriendly to business.

"The gay thing was a non-issue," agreed Michael Green, co-owner along with his partner, Stephen Boyd, of the historic Triangle Inn. Green serves on the boards of several Palm Springs business associations. He said the election results came as welcome news to most small business owners who have often been at odds with City Hall. ▼

Q&A with Ron Oden

by Ed Walsh

Last week, Ron Oden, mayor-elect of Palm Springs, sat down with the *Bay Area Reporter* for an interview. Below are his comments.

B.A.R.: Why were you elected?

Oden: People know me and they trust me. I don't think people voted for me because I'm African American nor did they vote for me because I'm gay. I believe people voted for me because they have confidence in my leadership and my ability.

Were you prepared for all the media attention?

I was prepared for the local stuff but the national press is on an entirely different level that I was not prepared for. I think the swearing-in will be quite an ordeal for the city.

I read that you won't run for re-

election after serving your four-year term as mayor. Is that true?

I'm only elected for one term. We will see how this all works out but at this point I'm just looking to finish the four years. I don't know what tomorrow holds for us. I think you have to know when to move on and what's best for the city. If, in four years, they think it's best for me to stay longer, I will be open to that. It's a matter of evaluation.

Any thoughts of running for higher office?

I won the 2000 Democratic nomination for Congress. I did better than any other Democrat has in this area. I didn't have the party support but I still did better than the candidate that they endorsed.

What do you hope to accomplish?

One of the first things I want to address is to make the city business

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SFSU scholarship honors gay alumnus

by Matthew S. Bajko

The San Francisco State University Cinema Department is announcing today (Thursday, November 20) the establishment of a scholarship for its students in memory of alumnus and lecturer Gordon B. (Don) Thomas.

An award-winning animator and filmmaker, Thomas was the first SFSU student to earn a master of fine arts degree in animation cinema, graduating in 2001. He went on to teach beginning and advanced courses in animation at the University until his death.

The openly gay Thomas and his short animated film *Pedro + Tony?* received worldwide publicity when he ran around Park City, Utah, dressed in a chicken suit during the 2002 Sundance Film Festival to promote the movie. A stop-motion and hand-drawn animated short, *Pedro + Tony?* is a comedy of errors that turns serious when Pedro, a dog, and his boyfriend Tony, a chicken, celebrate their six-month anniversary amid tension and fights.

"I was inspired to make this film as I got more involved in romantic relationships," Thomas told an interviewer about the film. "The more I learned about what it takes to keep love going, the more I realized there were so few films out there that really talk about it. I tried to keep it honest, touching and entertaining without being too simple or contrived."

The film screened at more than 50 festivals worldwide, including at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, and won the Best Animation Prize at the 2002 Chicago Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival. He had been working on developing the film into a cable television series.

However, Thomas committed suicide on June 6 of this year. The filmmaker was 35.

"Don was highly creative, diligent, and inspiring. He believed in the strength of human diversity and artistic statements of issues of importance," said Dick Thomas, his father. "We look forward to assisting aspiring filmmakers who share these same values and attributes."

The scholarship in Thomas's honor will be announced officially at an invitation-only memorial



The late Gordon B. (Don) Thomas

film screening tonight on the SFSU campus. The \$500 scholarship will be awarded to one SFSU cinema student each year. So far, \$6,860 has been donated in private funds. Members of Thomas's family, as well as his partner Ron Ng, are expected to attend.

"Don believed in the power and necessity of finding one's own voice," Ng said. "In our homogeneous corporate mediated society, our voices and stories are often disregarded and ignored, and our isolation from each other magnified. Don believed that out of necessity for our collective survival, we need to hear each other's voices and stories to find our way into the future, together."

Friends and family said Thomas was well-liked and well-regarded for his creativity and sense of humor by both faculty and students.

"He was a stellar colleague for me, always cheerful and willing to help with everything and an extremely talented artist and filmmaker," said Martha Gorzycki, assistant professor of cinema and animation coordinator.

Thomas's earlier films include *Goodbye, I Love You*, which earned the 1998 Gold Apple Award from the National Educational Media Network, and *FIXIT*, winner of the 1994 Silver Apple Award at the National Educational Film and Television Festival.

A native of Naperville, Illinois, Thomas was among the first openly gay high school students in his district and served as a role model, mentor, and counselor to other adolescents struggling with issues of sexual orientation. His

advocacy for acceptance and tolerance remained a priority and is evident in his film work.

He graduated from Northwestern University in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in education/human development before moving to California. In 1995 he produced, directed, and animated the USA Networks' *Idiot's In Orbit*. In 2001 he was a character fabricator for *Phantom Investigators*, a Saturday morning stop-motion show on the WB Network.

As his family and friends wrote in his obituary, "Don was a talented and dedicated teacher of animation at SFSU, who believed that our voices must be heard to help this world heal and love. He lived out his dreams of being an independent filmmaker in San Francisco."

The SFSU Foundation is accepting donations in memory of Thomas for the scholarship. Last month, the Northwest Asian American Film Festival in Seattle hosted a special screening of *Pedro + Tony?* to raise money for the scholarship fund.

To make a contribution, write a check out to the SFSU Foundation, include "in memory of Don Thomas" on the memo line, and send to: Jennifer Severin, Office of Development, San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94132. ▼

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vantages that flow from the assurance of a 'stable family structure in which children will be reared, educated, and socialized,' and found no rational basis 'to penalize children by depriving them of State benefits' because of their parents' sexual orientation.

"The marriage ban works a deep and scarring hardship on a very real segment of the community for no rational reason," the decision stated.

Rather than throw out the marriage law as unconstitutional, the justices remanded the case to the trial court and delayed its implementation for 180 days "to permit the Legislature to take such action as it may deem appropriate in light of this opinion."

Justice John M. Greaney concurred with the majority but would have gone further. Using "equal protection" analysis, he would order immediate issuance of a marriage license. Delaying the remedy "on the grounds that the couples are of the same gender, constitutes a categorical restriction of a fundamental right."

The three dissenters, in a decision penned by Justice Robert J. Corday, argued, "The court has transmuted the 'right' to marry into a right to change the institution of marriage."

They drew upon U.S. Supreme

Court decisions that tied the "fundamental" right to marry "primarily on the underlying interest of every individual in procreation, which, historically, could only legally occur within the construct of marriage because sexual intercourse outside of marriage was a criminal act."

"... No matter how personal or intimate a decision to marry someone of the same sex might be, the right to make it is not guaranteed by the right of personal autonomy."

Corday's dissent acknowledged that plaintiffs had made a powerful case for the extension of the benefits and burdens of civil marriage to same-sex couples, but he argued, "that decision must be made by the legislature, not the court."

Justice Martha B. Sosman, in a separate dissent that was joined by the two other judges, argued that the Legislature should not tinker with the traditional definition of marriage until it is sure that it will not adversely affect this critical institution within society. She advocated a circular Catch-22-type approach that would defer gay marriage until society reached a consensus that the idea in the abstract was a good one.

Reactions

"This is a momentous legal and cultural milestone. The law caught up with the reality that gay people and families are part of the

fabric of our communities," said Mary L. Bonauto, an attorney with Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the Boston-based group that represented the gay couples.

"This is a proud moment for our family," said lead plaintiff Hillary Goodridge. "We no longer have to explain to our 8-year-old daughter why we can't marry, or that we love each other even though we are not married. And more importantly, we'll be able to provide Annie with the full protections under marriage" that we cannot provide now.

"We hope that our fellow Americans will treat these new marriages just like they want their own to be treated, offering respect and support to these couples," said David Buckel, director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education's Marriage Project. Lambda is appealing a lower court decision on marriage in New Jersey.

"Our U.S. Supreme Court victory [on sodomy] pushed open a door that had been locked for gay people for decades," said Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal. "Today's decision is in that same spirit. We will build on our victory and deliver its promise to gay people in all areas of life, including relationship recognition, parenting, schools, and employment."

Yet even amidst the celebrating there were warnings of caution. "We are also preparing our families for an onslaught of attacks by right-wing activists," said Dave Noble, executive director of National Stonewall Democrats. "The ruling is the beginning, not the end, of our struggle for all marriages to be treated equally."

The Family Research Council is leading the right-wing charge. "This is a wake-up call for both the American public and our elected officials," said FRC presi-

dent Tony Perkins, predicting the apocalyptic.

"If we do not amend the Massachusetts State Constitution so that it explicitly protects marriage as the union of one man and one woman, and if we do not amend the U.S. Constitution with a federal marriage amendment that will protect marriage on the federal level, we will lose marriage in this nation."

"We must amend the Constitution if we are to stop a tyrannical judiciary from redefining marriage to the point of extinction," Perkins said.

Most leading Democratic political leaders have embraced a traditional definition of marriage as between a man and a woman, and yet have opposed amending the Constitution. Their Republican counterparts have been wary of embracing a constitutional amendment, pending the Massachusetts decision. ▼

My Place

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having sex in bars.

"If straight people are having sex on the beach, the police say stop doing that. If it is a gay couple, they are going to be arrested. Gay sex has always been much more of a hot button issue and I don't think that is right," said Brace. "I think the ABC regulations should be changed. I support safer sex and they try to educate their patrons about that. I do believe in responsibility but I also believe in freedom of choice."

Brace said the incident has upset many gay men because they remember when police would routinely harass and arrest gay

men in the city's gay bars.

"If a bar wants to remain open and doesn't want people to have sex, I certainly support that. They have a right to run their establishment and to run their bar the way they choose," he said. "But I don't support the ABC coming in and arresting patrons in private places where in many cases no one is being offended and no one cares. It takes us back to the bad old days where they were arresting people in gay bars."

Gomez counters that his agents are only following the law, which prohibits sexual acts from occurring in establishments where alcohol is served. And he said his agents are not targeting gay bars. The ABC only acts when people make complaints, he said.

As My Place awaits a decision from ABC administrators, Cip said he is launching a new ad campaign in the coming weeks that will clearly state the bar's zero-tolerance policy when it comes to having sex inside the bar. While he feels awful that things had to come to this point, he hopes that gay men will now realize what the consequences can be for engaging in certain behaviors.

"Everybody thought it was us. They would get mad at us for being hard-asses on them for no apparent reason. It isn't us trying to ruin anybody's good time. You can get fucking arrested," he said. "There are lots of sex clubs for people to go to. They don't have to think they can come to my bar or the Powerhouse to have sex." ▼

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'Circles of Hope' honors Milk

The Reverend Dr. G. Penny Nixon, left, congratulated creator Gilbert Baker on the 25th anniversary of his rainbow flag at the Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco's fourth annual "Circles of Hope" gala November 15. The late Supervisor Harvey Milk was also honored, as were organizations celebrating their 25th anniversaries: the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, Theater Rhinoceros, and Olivia, the lesbian-themed entertainment company. A recipient committee composed of those who knew and worked with Milk accepted the award, which will be housed at the GLBT Historical Society.



Dan White

◀ page 1

years.

While it was not the first time that White's lawyers had spoken publicly about the trial, Scherr said he believed it was the first time in many years that they had discussed the case and was probably the first time they had shared a stage.

Hammer quickly brought up his theories about the case.

"I think it was the first gay-panic defense," Hammer said of the White trial. "What if it had been 12 gay and lesbian people on that jury?"

That point was raised several times throughout the evening. And Hammer concluded that it was jury selection in the White case that doomed the trial almost from the start.

Schmidt took exception to that, but acknowledged that the community has largely made up its mind on the issue.

"I would hazard to say that the slaying of Harvey Milk had nothing to do with sexual orientation," he said, "but that falls on deaf ears."

There were no gays or lesbians on White's jury. That's the way the defense wanted it, and the prosecution played into the defense's hands, Hammer said.

"Jim [Hammer] alluded to it and it's perfectly true — Doug [Schmidt] and I didn't want gay people on the Dan White jury, largely because we felt we'd have an uphill battle," Scherr said. "We were concerned and we made an effort to get a jury that did not have gay people on it."

Scherr, however, denied the White defense was gay panic. The evidence showed, he said, that Milk was working against the reappointment of White to the Board of Supervisors after White suddenly resigned, then changed his mind and went to Moscone to

get his job back. The night before the murders, White had heard that he would not be reappointed to his seat.

Scherr downplayed the Twinkie defense, saying that Schmidt, who did all of the talking during the 1979 trial, argued the murders were not cold-blooded, but committed in the heat of passion, coupled with the evidence that White suffered from depression.

"He would go into states where he wouldn't talk. We did present evidence of symptoms including radical diet change and junk food," Scherr said, but the bottom line, he said, was that White killed in the heat of passion and was mentally impaired.

"At the White trial we weren't gay bashing," Scherr added. "The defense itself was certainly not demeaning Harvey Milk."

But Hammer respectfully disagreed.

"I think it played to the fracture in San Francisco," he said of the trial.

Schmidt countered that the law by nature is an adversarial system.

"I look for some bias in my favor," he said.

"I think the D.A. played into that hand," Hammer replied.

"I think that's true," Scherr acknowledged. "Both sides chose conservative, family types that look favorably on police and firemen."

Hammer's theory is that the prosecution should have sought another type of juror, perhaps more liberal. Generally, prosecutors seek jurors who are more conservative, but in the White trial, that was exactly the type of juror that the defense sought, and that was the type of jury that was seated because the prosecution did not change tactics.

"Gays typically are more liberal and make good jurors — except in this case," Schmidt added.

The attorneys were asked if the

verdict would have been the same if White had only killed Moscone.

Scherr said that there has been speculation over the years that "White 'improved' his case by killing Harvey Milk. I don't think that's true." He pointed out that after shooting Moscone, White "trotted the length of City Hall," reloaded his weapon at some point, then "went to Milk, and shot him dead."

Hammer disagreed. "I think it did [help White]," Hammer said, going back to the jury that was selected. "I'm talking about 12 people who lived on the West Side. They cried for Dan White. They did not cry for Harvey Milk."

Scherr pointed out that many people strongly disliked Moscone because he was a liberal mayor, and spoke of the political divide in San Francisco in the late 1970s, saying it was worse than now.

During a question and answer session that followed, Schmidt was asked why White did not take the stand.

"Steve and I agreed he shouldn't testify," Schmidt said. "His story was told through professionals. The emotional content — the taped confession — was played by the prosecution."

"He was a hollow shell of a person, with vacant eyes and a personality that would not allow himself to talk about himself. He was a sick man and in fact killed himself after being incarcerated for five-plus years."

"But he wasn't a zombie," added Scherr. "He appeared at the trial."

White's attorneys were asked if he ever expressed remorse for the killings. Scherr said that he had.

Schmidt, however, perhaps summed up the entire horrific case.

"White did his term in prison, agonized for some time, and killed himself. So I think the verdict supported the evidence — and, no-body won." ▼

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Porn star gives you a bang for your buck

by Eric Ganther

Who: Michael Brandon
What: Adult entertainer
Where: San Francisco
Contact: monsterbang.com, ragingstallion.com

Straight men have sports heroes. Gay men have porn stars. Both are body-based careers that lead to lucrative sidelines: in sports — product endorsements, in porn — escorting. But all is not glory. The pitfalls are many and the road is often lonely. Many more fail than succeed, and the show is over the minute your body begins to show its age. This week I interview Michael Brandon, big-dicked, sweet-hearted, gay man, who uses his award-winning performances as an adult entertainer to keep his life clean.

What do you do for a living?

I'm an adult entertainer: escort, porn star, porn producer, and owner of a video line. I'm also a partner in the Raging Stallion Studios, where I'm producer of casting and promotions director. On the side, I use my porn celebrity to raise money for organizations like Under One Roof on Castro Street. We're doing a fundraiser together on Saturday, November 22, at the Eagle. Come join the fun.

Are you really gay?

Yes. Straight for pay.

Do you have a big penis?

I do. I call it "Monster." I married him for what he is: a big cock that gets hard and stays hard. It's the only thing on my body that has attitude. Monster and I working together have been a success like Sonny and Cher.

How did you get started?

I answered an ad for an agent recruiting for new stars. I walked in, took my clothes off, and did a circle to let him see my body — no scars or mars. He asked me if I could get a hard on and by the time the words were out of his mouth I was hard. And seconds later when it was raging he said, "Uh, I think we can work with you."

Being an adult entertainer is a fantasy career, what's exciting about it?

At first it was exciting to have sex with hot guys. But having sex with four lamps and a camera up your ass and a boom operator and a grip here and a grip there quickly becomes a job. What keeps me going is knowing that my fans will be jacking off to me six months down the line. I like making them smile. As an escort, it's my job to make them happy for an hour. And the exhibitionist in me loves

traveling the world with Monster and doing promotional strip shows.

Years ago, when I was a kid, I wanted to be in public relations. And here I am, promoting my cock! Aretha Franklin was born with a singing voice to make people happy. I was born with Monster and the personality and the body to bring it to the world and make people happy, too.

What's, uh, hard about being an adult entertainer?

The drugs and alcohol. And, god I've been there, but I've been clean for four years now. I don't like to look in someone's eyes and see nothing.

Life is hard for me sometimes too, but I don't use drugs to escape anymore. I have to really take care of myself because my professional life is so escapist oriented. It's a tight rope that I walk and I can't afford to be on drugs.

How has being an adult entertainer affected your personal relationships?

I probably do an average of 10 to 15 escort clients per week at \$300 to \$350 a pop and porn can net me \$1,500 a cum shot. So I don't have personal sex very often. I do have a handful of very close friends for whom I don't have to play "Michael Brandon." Sometimes I miss sexual intimacy, but it's not for lack of people interested!

In terms of my parents, they don't know the details of what I do. They might not necessarily be happy that I'm an adult entertainer, but they're happy that I'm successful in the field I've chosen. We're getting closer again as I get older.

Is it common for porn stars to be escorts?

Yes, but not all of them. Some actors are accountants or lawyers or work for Microsoft. It's a fantasy for them. They get to be hot on screen. They get to have sex with hot guys and get paid for it, and get the validation.

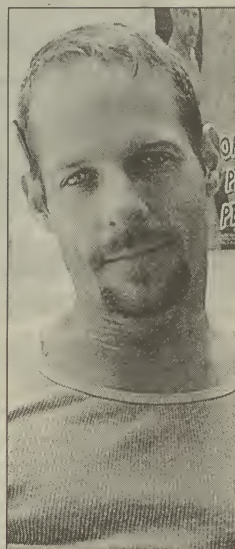
How are pornography and escorting different?

Escorting, you lock yourself into a room and play out the fantasy. It's in the comfort of your own home. Being an escort for some is work because they aren't enjoying what they're doing. Maybe if I weren't as successful as I am money might be a bigger thing for me. But it isn't. I can pick and choose.

In porn you're under bright lights with a director, who hopefully knows what he's doing. Being on a porn set is work, much more so than escorting. But at this point in my career I'm producer as well as an actor so I get to pick whoever I fuck or fucks me. Most directors are relieved when I walk onto a set because they know it's going to be a good shoot. I connect. I love what I do.

What's your opinion of sex addiction?

I'm definitely sexually addicted (I've been on close to 200 sets over the last three years). What I've done with the addiction is turn it into a profitable thing. As for my clients, some of them would spend money on Michael Brandon that they shouldn't. If I sense that my services are creating prob-



Porn star Michael Brandon

lems, I become unavailable.

Is it difficult walking down the street as a porn star?

I used to keep my real name very separate from Michael Brandon. But until recently I just saw myself as a big-dicked white boy, there weren't any other adjectives to put with that. But it's changing. Through adult entertaining and the 12-step program, I can see the changes. The clients love my body but they also talk about my personality and what a nice guy I am. The challenge for everybody in this business is to bring the characters together, the real guy and the porn star.

How does age play a role in your plans?

I'm 38 now and see myself in front of the camera for maybe three to five more years. I'm trying to set myself up for when that time comes. It will be a difficult transition for me because I love the validation. But I'm a realist. It won't last forever.

Where's the money in gay pornography?

You're not going to make a living being a porn star. If you're lucky you make \$1,500 a shoot. Most of the money from porn comes from video sales, so I've taken my profits and plowed them into production. I also use the porn star as a vehicle for my escorting business. It gets me free advertising and calls late at night.

In terms of the studio business, it's all about self-distribution. You have to take away the distributor/middleman — there's less hassle that way.

What makes it work? Why are you a two-time winner of the Gay Video award?

My love of the camera. My understanding that my fans are going to be seeing this. My drive to make this film at least as good if not better than my last film. Then there's getting into the other actor's head. "Listen to what I say. Watch what I do. Move when I move you. Trust me." If I see fear in their eyes, I respond. I connect. I shy away from group scenes because I can't take care of everybody on the set. The more comfortable the actors are, the better the shoot will be. The camera picks up everything. It reads tension and chemistry.

From the directorial side, it has to be as easy and free flowing as possible. Don't over direct. If the actor's getting his groove on, the director shouldn't want him to stop and change positions. This is where it's important to have experienced actors, who know to let the light in, who can find the camera and work for it.

Do you do bareback videos?

No. On the set we always practice safe sex. I act as if everyone has HIV, then there's no worries. But barebacking videos are very popular, it's a huge part of the industry. And I've had some associates who've gone over to the bareback side. But Michael Brandon, the fantasy man, can't do that. I want to show the community how to use a condom. If people see Michael Brandon fucking without a condom then it makes it okay for them to do it too.

If somebody is interested in being an adult entertainer, what do you tell them?

I tell him that we're in the business to sell sex and bodies and beautiful men. If he's good, I will tell him he has to work hard and get connected with reputable people like Chi Chi La Rue and Chris Ward.

There's a lot to watch out for. Drama will undo lots of hard work: stay away from it as much as possible. The same for drugs and alcohol. We've lost lots of talent because of speed, G, X, etc. Being successful takes loads of work. Folks out there will use their supposed connections to get in your pants.

Tell me about your experience with drugs.

I was homeless for nine years, selling drugs to make ends meet. And I learned the depths humans will go to get what they want. Lots of violence over a pinhead of dope. I got caught with drugs and did prison time for eight and a half out of 10 years. In many ways, jail saved me from myself. I've come so far from trying to make a pen into a makeshift needle. I'm no longer surviving, I'm thriving. Life doesn't have to be horrible. I'm living proof.

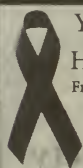
What have you learned about the difference between gay men and straight men?

There's not much of a line really. In prison, when straight guys are out in the yard, they're macho, but when the cell door closes and they understand that yes, I'm a homosexual but not a gossip drama queen, that they can trust me, then their legs go up in the air very quickly. But it's usually under the guise of falling in love: I make them feel good so they want to make me feel good. And they're straight to themselves — straight culturally that is. I'm beginning to think that sex is what gays and straights have in common. It's the culture that we create that's different.

Thank you for your inspiring story, Michael. Have fun at the Under One Roof benefit this Saturday at the Eagle. ▼

Eric Ganther is a career coach for queers in transition. He is a workshop leader and is writing a book on gay and lesbian work identity. E-mail him your questions, comments, and suggestions: eric@ericganther.com.

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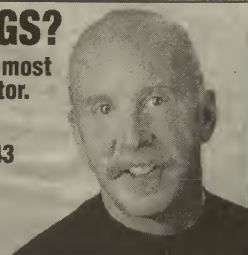
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George T. Monk
Nov. 16, 1958 — Nov. 2, 2003



Born in Florida, entered into rest in the "City By The Bay" to meet his life partner Danny Wong who preceded him four years ago. He lived for many years in Hayes Valley of San Francisco.

George was active in the Gay Community and supported numerous events and fundraisers. A member of the Imperial Court as Prince to the Council of Emperors, he was a current member of the board of Directors on the Imperial Council.

George is survived by his father, two brothers, two sisters and many nieces and nephews all of Washington State.

He also leaves many friends who will miss him at Marlena's Bar, the Polk Rendezvous, the Mint Bar and the Edge Bar.

George worked at many bars; most recently he was the Sunday bartender at Marlena's and was known for his fabulous Bloody Mary mix, the recipe for which he took with him.

A celebration of his life will be held this Saturday, November 22, 2003 starting at 1 p.m. at Marlena's Bar, 488 Hayes St. at Octavia.

Memorial donations may be made in his memory to the AIDS Memorial Grove of Golden Gate Park.

Darrel "Dino" Martin
Dec. 20, 1948 — Nov. 7, 2003

Beloved Domestic Partner of Rick Manning, beloved husband of Cathy Coakley, Dino passed to a higher plain on the morning of Friday, November 7, 2003.



Dino was born in South Bend, Indiana, and grew up in Detroit, Michigan where he joined the U.S. Navy ROTC and served two terms in Vietnam. He stayed on in San Francisco after his discharge from the military here.

Dino was well-loved by all who knew him, and he will be sorely missed.

Additionally, he is survived by his 84-year-old loving mother Sylvester Martin of Detroit, Michigan, his sisters Linda Watson and Harriet Booker, also of Detroit, his brothers Romeo and Phillip "Punkin" Martin of South Bend, Indiana, and Michael Martin of Atlanta, Georgia, as well as two sons and grandchildren and many nieces and nephews of Detroit, Michigan.

A celebration of his life will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 22, 2003 at St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church St. (across from Safeway at Market & Church); phone 415-621-2635. Pastor Douglas Fitch of Glide Methodist Church will preside.

In lieu of flowers, the family is asking that you make a donation in his name to his beloved Continuum, 255 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102.

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Gay Games delegates move on after fallout

by Jim Provenzano

With the battle over the license to host Gay Games VII between the Federation of Gay Games and Montreal 2006 now over, local federation delegates have returned to the Bay Area, disappointed but hopeful for the future of the official Gay Games VII.

Representatives from Montreal 2006, the group that won the bid for Gay Games VII, had yet to sign contracts or make an initial payment two years after winning the bid. In refusing to accept the final bid, it also made many accusations about the process.

A statement by the Federation of Gay Games said that it was "saddened and bewildered by Montreal 2006's aggressive offensive to promote its position at the cost of dividing the GLBT community in general and the Gay Games movement in particular."

Having raised concerns about discord between Canadian sports groups and the international federation, whose offices are in San Francisco, federation statements cited "blatant inaccuracies" in Montreal's last remarks.

While representatives of Montreal 2006 may have gained the majority of media quotes through the week of the Chicago meetings, others who participated in the annual meeting, held November 7-15, attest to a different experience that contradicts Montreal's claims.

Part of the problem was the federation's inability to counteract Montreal's claims. Unlike Montreal 2006, which includes paid employees in a for-profit company, federation communications needed to be approved by a committee that was engulfed in the non-profit's annual meeting agenda.

Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 issued divisive remarks that the federation "represents little more than itself, with only 21 of the 1,000 sports teams around the world being FGG members."

"This remarkably misleading statement is shown errant by even a cursory look at the federation roster," said a federation statement (The expansive list is posted on the federation's Web site, www.gaygames.org.)

"The federation represents far more than itself," the FGG statement continued. "It is literally composed of directorships that attempt the difficult task of effectively representing the global GLBT sport community on a largely voluntary and unpaid



FGG contract negotiators, from left: Des Sullivan, Teresa Galetti, Kathleen Webster, Gene Dermody, Roberto Mantaci, and Richard Cobden.

basis. In contrast, Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 was organized to represent itself only."

Chi-town

Though this split may give Chicago an advantage to host Gay Games VII, even organizers of the annual meeting — and a previously unsuccessful bid — offered regret over the outcome.

"The contract called for an appropriate amount of review over Montreal's budget and any additional elements added to the Gay Games in Montreal 2006, should additional funding be received," said Kevin Boyer, the Chicago Planning Committee lead organizer for the FGG 2003 annual meeting.

Boyer was the first co-chair of Chicago 2006 and currently serves on the Chicago Games Inc. board of directors, in addition to other GLBT groups that supported Chicago's recent and future Games bids.

"I've seen the faces of the FGG negotiators and spoken with them about what happened," he said. "They are heartbroken that negotiations didn't succeed, but resolute that they would not allow another Gay Games to move forward without what they considered to be appropriate oversight. The result could be yet another financial debacle, and the further degradation of the movement and the name."

"Gay Games supporters around the world can be assured that the Gay Games is going forward and its history will be respected," said FGG co-President Roberto Mantaci. "I am personally proud that our board refocused its work to ensure that the Gay Games event remains a strong statement to the world about mat-

ters of importance involving the GLBT community in sports and culture."

Language barrier

Bay Area FGG delegates are taking the long view, and look forward to a possible spring 2004 decision as to the dates and location of the official Games VII.

Gene Dermody, who served as FGG vice president, acting president, and now is an individual delegate, is also the coach of Golden Gate Wrestling Club. A medalist in each of the first six Games, Dermody is known for his passionate and outspoken knowledge of the sometimes arduous processes that have built the GLBT sports movement.

The larger issue of financial "control" versus "accountability" has also been debated. Dermody maintains that the federation never intended to control the accounts of Montreal, but to oversee its progress, to prevent what happened most recently with Gay Games VI.

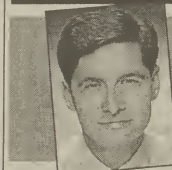
"Sydney's Games would have been closed down by their government [they have audit laws about ticket sales] before opening ceremonies if the government knew what was really in the their books," he said.

Dermody disputed claims of "unreasonable controls" being made by the federation, to prevent the seventh Games from repeating the pattern of increasing debt.

When asked to show sponsorship agreements that Montreal 2006 claimed to have with Tourism Montreal, municipal and provincial governments, and Radio Canada, Dermody said that Montreal representatives failed to show up for that meeting.

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Run for your life

by Jim Provenzano

Richard Apodaca defines the term "long-term survivor." Diagnosed with AIDS almost before it was even named, his life over the past two decades is a checklist of more opportunistic infections than most people can remember.

"I had everything, including Stephen Johnson's syndrome, where my skin came off, and rashes, but I just keep plugging away."

Yet, only a few weeks ago, he ran the New York Marathon, one of several amazing accomplishments for anyone, particularly any 60-year-old.

"Four years ago, I had terrible neuropathy," said the San Francisco resident, who is now retired. "I couldn't even put socks on."

"At the time, I was constantly running out of my cocktail medications. I was living for the next clinical trial. The only thing they could give me was tranquilizers. Most of the day I was nodding out."

One of those trials was for T20, which he said was "very expensive, and only prescribed for end-stage patients."

"I had been a really active person." For a time, he discontinued all medications, and found a pain management doctor who tried chili oil.

"It burned my feet," Apodaca said. "But by the fourth day, I could walk."

Later, back on his meds, his cocktail regimen was maintaining his condition, but his tests showed low double digits on T-cells, which would rise and fall again and again.

Said Apodaca, "It was like treading water."

He then entered a trial for what is now called Fuzeon (enfuvir-

tide).

According to Roche, the pharmaceutical company that manufactures Fuzeon, it's "the first fusion inhibitor, representing the first new class of anti-HIV treatments in seven years. Unlike all currently approved anti-HIV drugs, Fuzeon blocks HIV's ability to infect healthy immune (CD4) cells. When used with

other anti-HIV medicines, Fuzeon can reduce the amount of HIV in the blood and increase the number of CD4 cells, which has been shown to slow HIV progression in patients who have developed resistance to currently available medications."

Eight months later, Apodaca said he regained his energy, his T-cells returned to triple digits, and his viral load is now undetectable.

Although treatment requires injections in his stomach, the only area of his body with enough fat to absorb it, Apodaca credits the drug for aiding his recovery.

As thanks, he's working with Roche to be a sort of poster man for the treatment.

He's also active with Aid for AIDS, a nonprofit that sends drugs to South America, Central America, and South Africa. The group collects leftover AIDS medications to bring them to Third World countries for patients who can't get even the most basic of HIV drugs.

In between his personalized drug-sharing activism, he's collecting toys for a Mission District Christmas party for local kids, organizing STD training with street youth through Mission Health Center, and helping out with the Names Project.

He does about one marathon a month.

So much for being "retired."

Big Apple

The New York Marathon marked Apodaca's ninth marathon in 18 months, an experience he called "mind-boggling. They get 2 million people on the road cheering people on."

Being of Mexican and Puerto Rican descent, he particularly enjoyed the occasional shout of "Viva Salinas!" and offerings of coco frito, a sweet juice drink.

"We went through Harlem, and all these Baptist ladies in big hats were handing out Tootsie

Rolls. It was awesome."

Born in San Francisco, Apodaca moved to New York at age 19, but returned here 15 years ago.

"When you run down Park Avenue, the voices just bounce off the buildings. I was tired, but my adrenaline flowed."

Apodaca hopes to keep running. He has a dozen marathons planned over the next couple of months. He's also been swimming in the bay to train for triathlons, and occasionally trains with San Francisco Frontrunners. He was also recently featured in the June issue of *Runner's World*.

"I just feel blessed with good genes and good doctors."

Another treatment he's trying is human growth hormone. "They want to test my thymus, to trick my immune system into thinking I'm 18. If they can do that, Humpty Dumpty's put together again."

Not that he doesn't recall a few other lost friends.

"Whenever I run, I always wear a picture of a friend's face, to remind me," he said.

"A lot of us are getting our lives back. If you stick with a treatment, almost everyone can survive."

Apodaca strongly believes that some sort of sport or exercise is crucial to that regimen.

That may not include his stalwart training, which often includes a 5 a.m. wake-up call, and a trek with his pals at a running boot camp.

All of this renewed enthusiasm serves his current focus of getting corporations to sponsor his outreach toward donations of HIV drugs and other means of helping others.

"Some of us just have to do it," he said. "As long as I have that energy, I'll do it."

Sunny run

Speaking of running, Bay Area Distance Runners is planning some new events in various sunny locales over the next few months, including Las Vegas, Napa Valley, and Big Sur.

While most of the members are lesbian and gay, they welcome everyone who is comfortable in a lesbian and gay atmosphere. Currently there are about 150 members from the Bay Area and nationwide, encompassing all speeds and age ranges. Join up and get info at www.sfbadr.com.

San Francisco Front Runners will be celebrating its 30-year anniversary in January. The group hosts runs at Golden Gate Park on Saturday mornings, and Tuesday evenings along the Embarcadero.

Get in step at www.sffrontrunners.org.



Marathon man: Richard Apodaca in Manhattan

Several Bay Area groups have joined in support of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and its client, Matthew Cusick, to voice their opposition to Cirque du Soleil's "discriminatory firing" of the HIV-positive gymnast. They include Stop AIDS Project, the San Francisco LGBT Community Center, the Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center,

Safety net

Leafleting at Cirque du Soleil's San Francisco production, *Alegria*, will take place tonight (Thursday, November 20) at 6:30 p.m. For more info, call Lambda's western regional office at (213) 382-7600, or visit www.lambdalegal.org.

PFLAG-San Francisco and PFLAG-Peninsula, Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services, the Horizons Foundation, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights.

Leafleting at Cirque du Soleil's San Francisco production, *Alegria*, will take place tonight (Thursday, November 20) at 6:30 p.m. For more info, call Lambda's western regional office at (213) 382-7600, or visit www.lambdalegal.org.

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Gay Games

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They did bring contracts the next day, but written only in French (federation bylaws state that English is the official language of all meetings and communications). Dermody said that Montreal representatives refused to allow the FGG translator to view the contracts with a federation lawyer.

Dermody noted this as an example of Montreal representatives' previous sensitivity to the issue. When asked in 1997 during bids for the 2002 Games if the signage at their proposed events would be in French and English, Montreal delegates reacted as if deeply insulted.

"They practically blew a gasket," Dermody said.

Montreal's press statements also said that Équipe Montreal was banned from voting on Montreal's hosting, calling it "an undemocratic process." A later announcement accused the federation of "spin," and using the media as a public platform for their issues.

Yet its statements omitted the fact that Équipe Montreal released internal sensitive strategic planning documents that addressed FGG weaknesses to the media.

Montreal 2006 also used an unauthorized copy of the Sydney 2002 database to contact some 9,000 Gay Games participants. Équipe Montreal was only prohibited from voting on Montreal 2006 issues, but eventually voted out of the federation.

Équipe Montreal was only prohibited from voting on Montreal 2006 issues, but eventually voted out of the federation.

Team player

Ross Hayduk, a board member of Team San Francisco, also attended the Chicago meeting as a voting delegate.

Currently studying at the University of San Francisco in its sport management master's program, he said, "As a new delegate, it's a great responsibility, Team SF having grown from San Francisco Arts & Athletics," the

organization headed by Tom Waddell, which led to the first Games.

"I went into it very idealistic," Hayduk said. "I was one of Montreal's big cheerleaders, and had met with [Montreal 2006 co-President] Mark Tewksbury to discuss all the things we wanted to do."

As the Chicago meeting neared, Hayduk mentioned how the FGG Executive Committee tried to communicate the previous history of Montreal's negotiations.

Of the late media response to the argumentative meetings, Hayduk explained that, "Everything went out early with Montreal, because the federation wanted to answer questions truthfully, and didn't answer out of emotion."

Despite the past enthusiasm for Montreal's proposal, Hayduk knew of the quadrennial event's history.

"Other bidding cities have come in enthusiastically, but then it goes bankrupt," he said. "When

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Ron Oden

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ness people friendly. That's from our local residents to people who wish to locate or relocate their business here to the city of Palm Springs. We have a reputation [for being unfriendly to business], a shadow that's been lingering over us for a number of years. While we have vast opportunities that lie ahead of us, if we don't address that concern, those opportunities will be limited.

Will business be your focus?

We're looking at a \$4 million deficit. And we only have one industry, tourism. So it's important that we enhance our identity as an inviting tourist destination. While at the same time, we are bringing in or creating an environment to bring more businesses into the city so that we expand our tax base. So that if God forbid, anything should happen to tourism or to the economy which directly affects tourism, we will have something else to fall back on.

There's another component. We have more year-round residents in Palm Springs than we ever had. So we have to balance our identity as an inviting tourist destination with the quality of life for our residents. We have a very delicate balancing act to perform.

How important is gay tourism to the economy of Palm Springs?

I think it's very important.

Currently, gay visitors are bringing in a significant portion of tourism dollars and we are looking at whether we need to invest more money in what we know is working for us. It's not just the success of our gay hotels but the spillover effects because there are a lot of gay tourists who stay in the mainstream hotels.

What percentage of the city is gay?

We're better than 30 percent. I've heard 40 or 50. We're not 40 percent but it might be moving to 35. A lot of people think the political clout is commensurate with the economic clout, and it is not, because for a lot of people who live here, it is their second home, so they don't vote here. The appearance of the power and influence of the community is different from its actual impact.

Do you get the sense that some people fear that Palm Springs will turn into a city that gays are taking over?

People have not verbalized that concern. But it would be the same if this community became a third black, or a third Latino, or a third Jewish. But in the very near future, I am going to have a meeting with the clergy from Palm Springs and I am going to say to them quite pointedly that these are some issues that you are going to have to talk to your congregation about. And for some of them, I know it's a non-issue. But for others, it's a major issue.

What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in the 14 years you've lived in Palm Springs?

We've been pretty stable overall in population of about 42,000 to 43,000 people, but there's been a complete overturn of the population. I did a poll two years ago that found that 30 percent of the people who lived in Palm Springs lived here for five years or less. But what was astounding to me is that 60 percent lived here for 10 years or less. While the whole population is stable here, there's been a complete overturn in terms of the population itself.

How has the business climate changed?

It hasn't changed that much. It was negative when I came on the City Council [eight years ago]. In spite of the fact that we've made a lot of changes, the perception is that we're not business friendly and so the perception is the reality for the perceiver. We've never addressed the perception. I've been saying that on the council consistently for the past four years and it fell on deaf ears. There are some very specific things that need to be changed and until we do those things no one is ever going to believe that things are different.

What are some of those things?

We need to make some adjustments of management. One area is our legal staff. If you sit down to talk to any developers, or people

who contract with the city, they say our legal staff is the most difficult legal staff that they've ever dealt with. People have said to me that "I will not come to Palm Springs as long as you have that legal staff." That's wrong. And we've heard that over and over again yet we haven't done anything about it.

What's your take on politics in San Francisco?

I know quite a few people there. I don't really have a specific take on the politics there. But when it comes to business, it has to be able to function because that's generally the livelihood or least that balance for your community in terms of the services you can provide within the city and the quality of life. If things become so difficult for your city that your businesses start leaving, you're in trouble. And we have been in trouble and we are trying to create an environment for them to return.

Do you get to San Francisco very often?

Not that often. I think I went there twice last year but I think I'll be visiting more frequently now.

With your strong emphasis on business, you sound like a Republican. Why are you a Democrat?

I'll tell you why I'm a Democrat. At the last convention, as I walked through the Staples Center, I saw America. I saw rich, poor, every race, color, every sexu-

al orientation seated side by side talking about the democratic process in this country. Somehow people think that to be a Democrat means that you're not fiscally responsible or that you're not pro-business and they see them as the antithesis of one another and I completely disagree with that. Completely. But I will tell you that Republicans have been trying to recruit me for a long time.

I read somewhere that you're an ordained minister, is that accurate?

What?! (laughs) Yes, I am an ordained minister and I pastored for a number of years. I was married. I have two children and I have a grandchild.

Where's your family from?

My former wife and kids are from New Orleans.

They must be very proud of you.

They are.

Do you have a partner?

I've been single now for three years. You know it's better to be single than to be (long pause) dead. (laughs). I have a difficult life. When you go out, all of a sudden everyone is talking to you, no one ever says anything to your partner. There are so many demands, and finding someone who understands that life. When I was married, when I was a minister, it was the same way. So everything I've ever done in life has been like that. ▼

Gay Games

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you hear the same lines, you feel you're getting set up. The federation wanted to cut way back, and they got rejected at every turn."

What the federation wanted to know, he said, was how the money would be spent. "If you're going to take money away from the athletes and put it into a dance party, or a lavish cultural festival, tell us ahead of time," he said.

How Montreal raised funds is also questionable. A bidding city that has not obtained a license should not make deals for an event they hadn't at the time been approved to host. Yet Montreal used them to justify its departure with the federation.

"They had two years and were making deals in the name of the federation, using the Games name," said Hayduk. "That's how they got the money."

Hayduk asked athletes to consider the difference between groups. "We are a nonprofit with an all-volunteer staff. People don't understand the meaning of the federation. It's member sports teams and athletes all working together to represent us. We had to pay our way. San Francisco athletes don't realize how heavily they are represented, perhaps because the FGG hasn't marketed itself properly."

The question for the average participant remains: when will the official Gay Games VII be held, and will Montreal 2006 detract from that event?

"It's unfortunate that Montreal feels like it has to program an event at the same time," he said. "If they have the \$5 million, do something great in 2005. That would be fantastic."

Could Montreal provide enough housing and hotels for both the Games and Divers/Cité, its Pride celebration? Montreal said that facilities were being donated, but it offered no proof. Hayduk added that numbers change from bidding proposals to

actual contracts.

Hayduk said, "Équipe Montreal said, 'Trust us, and if you don't like it, then sue us.' But we can't do that after they've gone bankrupt."

"Sydney didn't need to be that big. Athletes are there for the sport. In their free time, the majority were not going to circuit parties."

And yet, Montreal's plan includes simultaneous Pride events that some said would turn the Games into a sideshow.

"We were so enthusiastic at IGLA 2003," said Hayduk. "Now, to be at odds with Montreal, and Mark Tewksbury, is saddening. But it's because I've taken a position to protect Tom Waddell's legacy."

Numbers crunching

Registration limits were also a touchy subject for Montreal, as its budget planned fees of up to \$200 U.S. per person. Montreal initially projected up to 24,000 participants.

Federation delegates were concerned that such a figure would have resulted in overcrowding. With only 11,000 participants in Sydney, some sports filled their ranks quickly, leaving most of those athletes competing several times a day throughout the week of competition.

Yet federation representatives did not make any hard demands on limits, as Montreal claimed.

"The federation's request for a financial model that could support 12,000 athletes was not a ceiling or a cap, but rather a foundational starting point on which to build the games as large as Montreal desired," said a federation statement. "Draft 13.5 accepted Montreal 2006's initial target of 16,000 participants and a budget of \$16 million (Canadian) as a base. [It] included mechanisms that would have allowed increases to the size and scope of Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 upon achievement of financial targets."

But were the blusterings of Canadian press releases a cover for

a less honest stance? Did Montreal plan to refuse to sign all along, saving themselves \$1 million Canadian, before negotiations?

Hayduk wouldn't speculate, but added, "Everyone who believed in them was stunned when we gave in to everything, and they still pulled out."

Dermody discounted the possibility that Montreal had no intention of signing. He did hint of possible discord within the ranks of Montreal's group, particularly the tourism representatives, who may have held sway over athletic representatives.

"Tourism Montreal left, leaving [co-President] Mark Tewksbury and a few others alone to deal with continued federation questions," Dermody said. "They were actually two factions that could not agree."

With the annual gay Pride celebration, Divers/Cité, taking place the same week, Tourism Montreal stands to make its share of in-kind and real dollars, simply by having thousands of tourists and participants show up, pay for hotel rooms, and bring income to the city. "Whether the event goes bankrupt or not, they get their money," Dermody added.

Dermody offered a longer view of the history of bids and voting between the federation and Montreal. "You have to remember that they bid two previous times," he said.

When they lost the bid to Sydney (for GGVI), Dermody recalls their committee making scornful accusations of favoritism and bias. Yet, the federation chose to forgive the outburst, and eventually voted the Montreal bid as the 2006 hosts.

Having severed ties to the federation, will Montreal succeed with its claims of starting a new group of advisers and organizers? What sports groups will align themselves with Montreal and risk taking sides against the federation?

Having so adamantly alienated potentially thousands of GLBT athletes, said Dermody, "They've

burned their bridges."

Next on the agenda

Despite the rancorous split with Montreal, other accomplishments were made at the Chicago meeting, including elections of board members and new participating sports groups. Southern California filmmaker David Sector also screened his in-progress documentary about the history of Gay Games.

A decision is expected soon on whether to hold electronic elections to choose the Gay Games VII host city, which will be decided by March 15, 2004.

Local athletes can learn more

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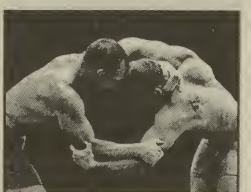
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CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICES

PROPERTY TAX -- FIRST INSTALLMENT DUE

Treasurer Susan Lee reminds all San Francisco property owners that the first installment of the Secured Property Tax for 2003-2004 must be paid by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10, 2003.

† Bills were mailed to all San Francisco property owners on or before November 1st. If you own property in San Francisco County and you do not receive your bill by November 10th, please call Taxpayer Assistance at (415) 554-4400 to have one sent to you, visit the City Payment Center in City Hall Room 140, or look up and print your bill online at www.cityservices.sfgov.org.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER ASSURANCE

Consumer Tip! With the high cost of fuel these days it's make sure you get what you pay for! Always make sure you are paying the advertised price per gallon for fuel. Contact the San Francisco Department of Consumer Assurance if you have a complaint relating to weight, count or measure. The round county seal on the gas pump ensures the pump was tested and the Department of Consumer Assurance phone number is on the seal for your protection. Be a smart consumer!

† Consumer Tip! Be aware of parking meters in San Francisco that do not give the correct amount of time for your money. If you receive a parking meter ticket in San Francisco and you believe the parking meter is inaccurate, contact the Department of Consumer Assurance and one of our inspectors will test the meter for accuracy. If the meter is found to be inaccurate, the Department can help you challenge the ticket. Provide the meter number and location of the meter when calling or using the online complaint form.

† The Dept. of Consumer Assurance protects San Francisco's citizens by researching consumer complaints regarding the sale of goods and services sold by weight, count or measure. Consumer protection includes testing scales, price scanners and packaged commodities in retail stores, testing taxicab meters for accuracy, testing gasoline pumps and many other devices. Inspectors regulate quality standards for produce, plants and flowers and complete pest inspections to protect California's billion dollar agriculture crops from diseases. The department protects consumers and businesses from dishonest practices that include fraud, deceptive practices or negligence. The Department also handles insect identification, bee inquiries and provides information about the Alemany Farmers' Market and Alemany Antique & Collectibles Market.

† Contact the Department to report possible fraud relating to weight, count or measure, deceptive packaging or advertising, retail store scanner pricing errors, inaccurate meters, short weight on products, substandard produce or illegal tobacco advertising. A consumer complaint form is available on our website at www.sfgov.org/cas/, or contact us directly with complaints. Help us promote equity in the marketplace in San Francisco!

† For more information: San Francisco Department of Consumer Assurance, 501 Cesar Chavez, Suite 109A, San Francisco, CA 94124; (415) 824-6100; fax (415) 285-8776; TTY: (415) 285-1214 Toll Free: (888) 966-SURE (7873); www.sfgov.org/cas/

ANIMAL CRUELTY IS A CRIME

San Francisco Animal Care and Control is responsible for the enforcement of all state and local animal control and welfare laws. If you see an animal being abused or neglected, or witness illegal activity involving animals, please call us at 554-9400 immediately.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CMC 03-541043

In the Matter of the Application of Zhi Xi Liang for Change of Name. The application of Zhi Xi Liang for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Zhi Xi Liang has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Vincent Leung. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 27th day of January 2004 at 9:00am., of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

NOV. 13, 20, 27, DEC. 4, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0271249-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Far West Fungli, 1 Ferry Building, San Francisco, CA 94111. This business is conducted by an husband and wife, signed John Del Santo Garrone and Toby Logan Garrone. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 09/09/86. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/05/2003.

NOV. 13, 20, 27, DEC. 4, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0271236-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Fignon's Coffee & Tea, 1532 Grant Ave., San Francisco, CA 94133. This business is conducted by a limited liability company, Romio, LLC (California). The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/05/2003.

NOV. 13, 20, 27, DEC. 4, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0270875-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Deborah Caperton Jewelry 226 Ellsworth St. San Francisco, CA 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Deborah Caperton. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/22/03. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/22/2003.

OCT. 30 NOV. 6, 13, 20, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CMC 03-541019

In the Matter of the Application of Corey Glenn Randle for Change of Name. The application of Corey Glenn Randle for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Corey Glenn Randle has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Dignan Phoenix Banes. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Room 218 on the 9th day of December at 9:00am., of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

OCT. 30, NOV. 6, 13, 20, 2003



STATEMENT FILE A-0270853-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Curves for Woman 1874 Market Street San Francisco, CA 94102. This business is conducted by a Limited liability company signed Ellen Buccianeri, president. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/22/03. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/21/2003.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270588-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Cloud 9 Smoke Shop, 400 Broadway San Francisco, CA 94133. This business is conducted by a general partnership signed Caroline Mai. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/09/2003.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 MCALLISTER, SF, CA 94102 STATEMENT OF DAMAGES CASE # CGC-03-417346

David La Bua, plaintiff vs. National Car Rental Inc. & David Shane, defendants.

GENERAL DAMAGES-- Pain, suffering and inconvenience - \$70,000.00, Emotional distress- 0.00, SPECIAL DAMAGES-- Medical expenses (to date)- \$5,000.00, Future Medical expenses-

\$20,000.00, Loss of earnings (to date) - 0.00, Loss of future earning capacity (present value)- \$5,000.00. Signed Lawrence M. Einhorn, associated counsel for the plaintiff.

NOV. 13, 20, 27, DEC. 4, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CMC 03-541017

In the Matter of the Application of Jessica Marie Grones for Change of Name. The application of Jessica Marie Grones for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Jessica Marie Grones has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Jessica Marie Maxwell. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Room 218 on the 6th day of January at 9:00am., of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CMC 03541007

In the Matter of the Application of Jonathan Alan Ford for Change of Name. The application of Jonathan Alan Ford for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Jonathan Alan Ford has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Jonathan McCain Winters Ford. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Room 218 on the 18th day of December at 9:00am., of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270827-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Cicil's 101 Spear Street B-5 San Francisco, CA 94105. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Justino Matamoros. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/16/2003.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270805-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Pro Gay Jobs 11 2358 Market Street San Francisco, CA 94114. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed David Bach. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/16/2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/20/2003.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270789-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: NPI Investors 479 Fair Oaks #4 San Francisco, CA 94110. This business is conducted by a Husband and wife, signed Renee Schable. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/20/2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/17/2003.

NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2003

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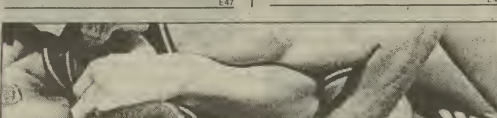
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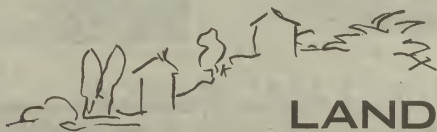
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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0270790-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Wealth Watchers 479 Fair Oaks #4 San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by a Husband and wife, signed James K Lewis. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/20/2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/17/2003.

NOV. 6,13,20,27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270644-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Lilbebo 659 Ashbury Street San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Daniel C. McCracken. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/14/2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/13/2003.

NOV. 6,13,20,27, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0270642-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Bears of San Francisco, BOSF, International Bear Rendezvous, IBR, Mr. IBR Bear, Contest/Title, Mr. IBR Daddy Bear Contest/Title, Mr. IBR Bear Cub Contest/Title, 584 Castro San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Darwin Bebo. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 04/07/1994. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/14/2003.

NOV. 6,13,20,27, 2003

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE

To whom it may concern: The Name of the Applicant(s) is Gonzalez Antonio. The Applicants listed above are applying to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 185 Berry Street, Suite #5600 San Francisco, Ca 94107, to sell alcoholic beverages at 1760 Polk St., San Francisco, Ca 94109. Typed for: 41-ON- SALE BEER AND WINE EATING PLACE

NOV. 13,20,27, 2003

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: ERNEST PRICCO, JILL PRICCO, AND DOES 1 TO 10, INCLUSIVE, YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:

NATHAN TAYLOR, AN INDIVIDUAL.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons is served on you to file a typewritten response at this court.

A letter or phone call will not protect you; your typewritten response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case.

If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case, and your wages, money and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may call an attorney referral service or legal aid office (listed in the phone book).

The name and address of the court is: Superior Court of Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz Branch, 701 Ocean Street, Rm. 110, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiff's attorney or plaintiff without attorney is: Stephen P. Roberts, Belsher & Becker, 412 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401; (805) 542-9900.

NOV. 13,20,27, DEC. 4, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 MCALLISTER, SF, CA 94102, AMENDED ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE #CPF-03-503532

HEATH STOVER, Petitioner, v. WHEN WILL WE RULE THE WORLD, LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, a California limited liability company, and SEAN WALL, an individual, Respondents.

TO WHEN WILL WE RULE THE WORLD, LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY and SEAN WALL: YOU ARE ORDERED to appear in Department 302 of this court, located at 400 McAllister Street, San Francisco, CA, on January 13, 2004, at 9:30 am, then and there to show cause, if you have any, why the petition of HEATH STOVER for dissolution of WHEN WILL WE RULE THE WORLD, LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, and designation of HEATH STOVER as the member to wind up the affairs of the LLC should not be granted.

This order together with a copy of the petition on file herein and any declarations filed in support of the petition shall be served on SEAN WALL in the same manner as service of summons at least 30 days prior to the date of hearing, or as otherwise specified in an order allowing publication pursuant to CCP §415.50. Dated Nov. 4, 2003, Ronald Evans Quidachay, Judge of the Superior Court.

NOV. 13,20,27, DEC. 4, 2003

STATEMENT FILE A-0271519-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: RoadTestReview.com 4518 18th Street San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Phil Ruth. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/20/2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/18/2003.

NOV. 20,27, DEC

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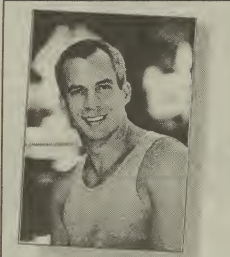
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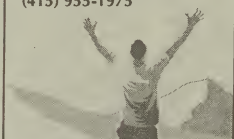
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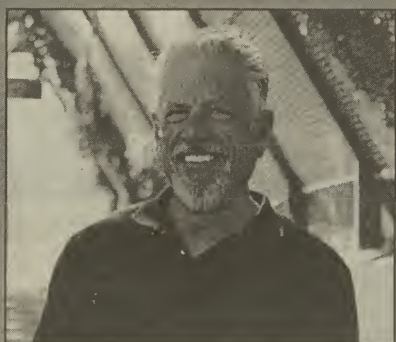
NOV\DEC 2003

Positive Force Events

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November Events

20 CAFÉ POSITIVE Thursday, Nov 20, 1pm @ Castro Country Club @ 4058 18th St @ Hartford St
Ready for a new afternoon routine? Make a date with other HIV+ men at Café Positive, the daytime social support event that's open to everyone and hosted by the volunteers of the Castro Country Club. Gab with the guys about the latest treatment newsflash and what you think is around the corner. Beverages and light lunch are on us!

20 POSITIVE SPACE: SoMa Thursday, Nov 20, 6:30pm @ The Eagle Tavern, Harrison @ 12th St
Is SoMa your neighborhood? Think the Castro is just a little too chi-chi? This is Positive Space with a leather twist. Come see and be seen.

25 PLUS: CHECK-IN GROUP Tuesday, Nov 25, 6:30pm @ P-Force Offices, 539 Castro St @ 18th St
Still feeling the glow of your weekend at PLUS? The PLUS Check-In Group is your opportunity to reconnect with your peers and see how life has been going since the weekend. (All PLUS grads welcome to attend.)

26 POSITIVE SPACE: WEDNESDAY SOCIAL Wednesday, Nov 26, 6:30pm @ H-Cafe, 3801 17th St @ Sanchez St
Feeling the mid-week blues? Need a way to help finish off the month on an up note? Well, H-Café is the place to be. The guys of Positive Force are out en masse at this great event.



December Events

2 POSITIVE SPACE: POLK Tuesday, Dec 2, 6:30pm @ Club Rendez-Vous, 1312 Polk St @ Bush St
Polk Street's friendliest staff makes this a view of your own. When we're there, it's the best balcony on the bay.

3 WEDNESDAY DROP-IN GROUP Wednesday, Dec 3, 5:30pm @ P-Force Offices, 539 Castro St @ 18th St
Have you been looking for that informal place to talk about what is going on day to day? Positive Force Drop-in Group is the place to be.

4 FOCUS GROUP Thursday Dec 4, 5:30pm @ Positive Force Offices @ P-Force Offices, 539 Castro St @ 18th St
Do you want your voice to be heard? Come share your thoughts and feelings about issues that affect us as HIV+ gay and bi men.

10 WEDNESDAY DROP-IN GROUP Wednesday, Dec 10, 5:30pm @ P-Force Offices, 539 Castro St @ 18th St
Have you been looking for that informal place to talk about what is going on day to day? Positive Force Drop-in Group is the place to be.

12 POSITIVE FORCE WINTER PARTY Friday, December 12, 6:30pm @ LGBT Center, 1800 Market St @ Octavia St
Please join us in celebrating four years of community-building and in thanking the dedicated volunteers who have made it all possible. Festive attire requested. RSVP not required. Please call the P-Force Info Line at 415.865.0790 x306 for more info.

18 CAFÉ POSITIVE Thursday, Dec 18, 1pm @ Castro Country Club @ 4058 18th St @ Hartford St
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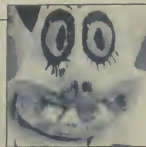
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Shostakovich's 'Lady Macbeth...'
Too much for Stalin, but just right for the SF Opera at the War Memorial.
page 29

'Lucky' to be here
Charles Busch comedy bows at New Conservatory.
page 28



Magic Marker films
Chris Marker's 'Sans Soleil,' 'La Jetée' at Castro.
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 33 • No. 47 • 20 November 2003

He calls Oscar 'Granddaddy!'

Oscar Wilde's grandson on the trials and tribulations by Brandon Judell

The lepers have Mother Teresa, heterosexuals have Pamela Lee Anderson, and gays, of course, have Oscar Wilde. As Claude J. Summers notes in *The Gay & Lesbian Literary Heritage*, Wilde was "one of the most accomplished writers of his generation, but quite apart from his actual literary achievement, he is significant as a symbolic figure who exemplified a way of being homosexual at a pivotal moment in the emergence of gay consciousness, the crucial final decade of the 19th century."

Yes, besides his brilliant plays, stories and essays, some feel Wilde left us his style. His wit. His pomp. His green carnations. Would gay humor have been so deliciously bitchy without Wilde as our icon? Who knows? If so, what a dreary lot we would have been without Oscar as our modern Socrates.

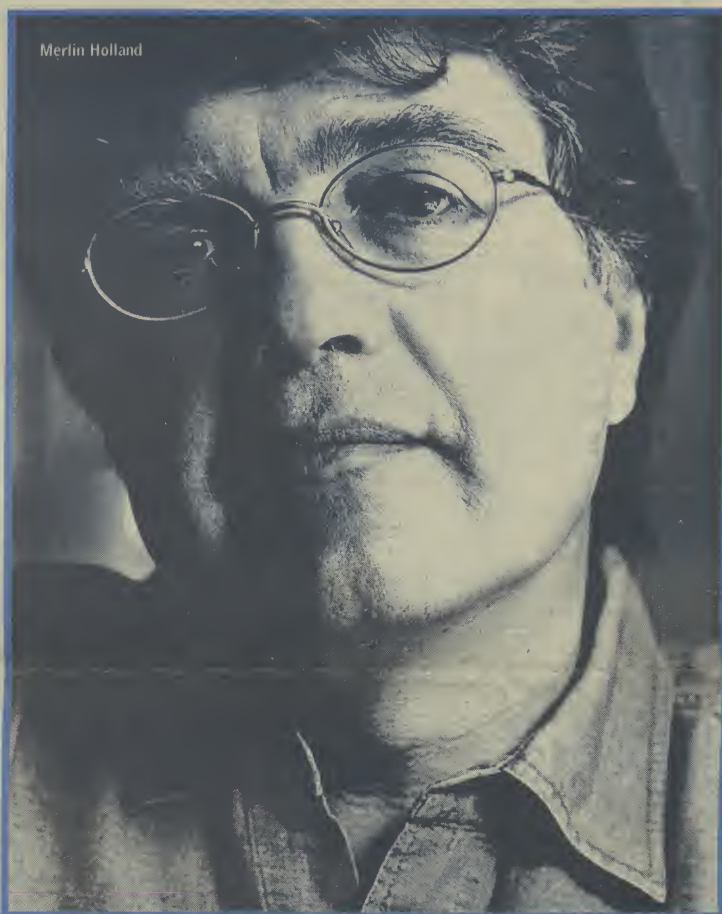
But what has fascinated most Wilde fanatics over the years are their hero's trial, imprisonment, and death shortly after his release. Why did Wilde sue his lover's father, the Marquess of Queensberry, for writing on a card that Wilde was posing as a sodomite? And why did Wilde break down in court and incriminate himself?

Well, we shall know more now with the release of Merlin Holland's *The Real Trial of Oscar Wilde* (4th Estate; \$27.95). This is as complete a transcript of Wilde's trials as we'll ever have, and Holland is Wilde's grandson. Yes, Wilde had two sons, and Merlin is the offspring of Vyvyan. The boys' surname was changed at the time to protect them from their father's scandal, and decades later, it still remains Holland.

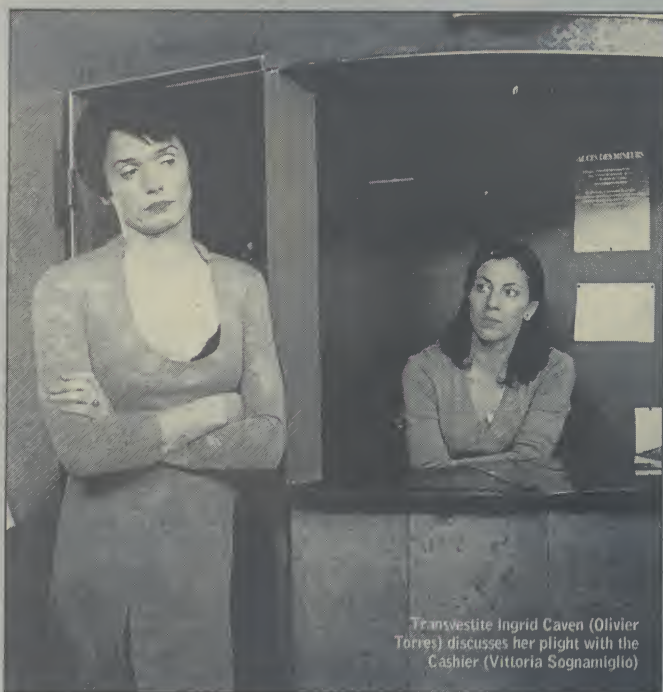
Chatting with the Paris-based heir of the *bon mots*, who never actually met Oscar, I asked him, why not regain the Wilde moniker?

"I did consider the possibility in 2000," Holland admitted in a rather refined

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Merlin Holland



Transvestite Ingrid Caven (Olivier Torres) discusses her plight with the Cashier (Vittoria Sognamiglio)

Grindhouse verities

Life in a Parisian 'Porn Theatre' by David Lamble

In the cruel light of a summer's day in Paris, the shabby little theatre, tucked away off a back alley in the 18th *arrondissement*, draws a larger crowd of pigeons than people. By late afternoon, a steady flow of men—middle-aged Frenchmen, younger Arab men, men in jeans and tattered jackets, men in dresses—plunk down their 31.40 francs, have their tickets torn by the female cashier, and file one by one down the worn stairs into a space to which the terms "pleasure palace" or "den of iniquity" don't do justice. This *Porn Theatre*, as fabulously imagined by writer/director Jacques Nolot, resembles a down-at-the-heels church, its patrons like parishioners, regulars who observe their rituals, flicking their Bics to check the condition of the seats before settling in for a hard day's night.

The last time I sat through a film that mixed drama with porn, it took a Classic Coke and a large Hershey bar to get me to the final credits. *Porn Theatre* is eminently watchable because its hardcore action, while no cheat, is an unusual

wrapper for a non-traditional intergenerational love story between the cashier (Vittoria Sognamiglio, projecting a giddy enthusiasm, as if the theatre were an erotic soup-kitchen), a 50-year-old ex-gigolo (Nolot himself), and a young projectionist (Sebastien Viala). This ex-schoolboy rugby player from the sticks lets the projector run itself while he absorbs the cashier's story, feeding her shots from a flask of whiskey. You sense his growing excitement.

The cashier, we learn, has been with women, but now she has her sights fixed on the ex-gigolo, though she knows he only cares for women as a way to get to men. The boy is fantasy bait for her trap. As the *de facto* ringmaster of this sexual circus (as well as part-time janitor, her broom keeping the pigeons at bay as if she feared they were Hitchcock's birds), the cashier urges the boy to experiment in his new surroundings. "I know people who regret they never had a homosexual encounter. I won't die ignorant."

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Decades devoted to decadence

Out There keeps having these fabulous flashbacks

by Roberto Friedman

All last week we were having intense sensory flashbacks to the 1980s, that long-past era of over-the-top greed and scary reactionaries that, in retrospect and compared to our current times, seems like a wrap and facial at the day spa. Back then, we weren't spared the miniseries called *The Reagans*, only it was the real thing, scripted by astrologers, which ran with high ratings for eight excruciating years. The Gipper never mentioned AIDS for years and years as it ignited all around us; and the right-wingers think a TV-movie is

offensive?

Yep, back in the day, it was a different world, chillun. We used land lines and pagers. Cocktail therapy meant a night out at the Stud, and Arnold was the name of the pig on *Green Acres*, not the one in Sacramento.

Trying desperately to return to the present, we went to a concert for boomers and their admirers billed as an intimate evening with '80s icon **Cyndi Lauper** last Wednesday night at the Lodge, a paneled party space on Van Ness which once served as quarters for the *Masonics*: ooooh, culty! The pop star was celebrating the release of a new CD, *At Last*, her takes on standards from decades

gone past. Even at a certain age, Lauper proved she's still a pistol, singing the shellac off "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" and "Unchained Melody," charging into the audience during up-tempo numbers, getting up on chairs and shaking her booty-thang. The

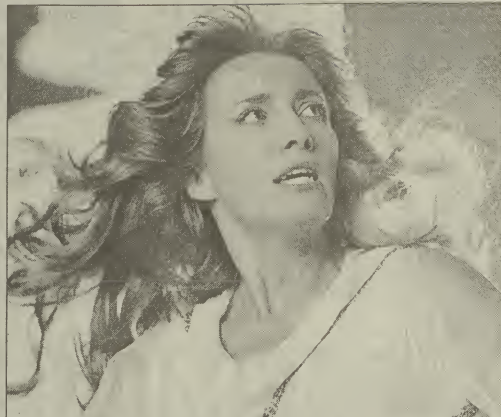


Lauper gives standards her all.

crowd was worshipful and very gay, and all the diva worship was well-deserved. Let's face it, **Madonna** basically stole Cyndi Lauper's act out from under her and ran with it. Now we can see that Madge's talent was mostly in marketing. Very '80s.

Then we were part of all the excitement at the Castro Theatre last Thursday night for the SF premiere of HBO's *Angels in America*, with a screenplay by **Tony Kushner** from his Pulitzer Prize-winning play about '80s plague-time; directed by **Mike Nichols**; and starring such big guns as **Al Pacino**, **Meryl Streep** and **Emma Thompson**. Watch for interview coverage in the Arts pages before it airs in early December.

Part I of *Angels* is called *Millennium Approaches*, and the title speaks to what's eeriest about revisiting Kushner's now-classic play: how prescient it was about the present, and the Republicans' goals of creating a one-party state.



Emma Thompson as an angel in HBO's *Angels in America*.

As Thompson says in one of her multiple roles, manifest as a street crone: "In the new century, we'll all be insane!"

Crowe's feat

Judging from the paunch and double-chin he displays onscreen, it appears actor **Russell Crowe** didn't miss a meal during the filming of his new movie *Master and Commander*. But Crowe's training for his next role as a boxer (once again directed by erstwhile child star **Ron Howard**) should solve the problem. As for eye-candy, *Master and Commander* has nothing to offer in the main roles, but watch carefully for the hunky blond **Adonis** cast as one of the ship's crew. He only makes a few appearances, one without his shirt, but when he's on-camera, everyone else disappears. Who is that unmasked man?

Meantime, a little cinema-loving bird told Out There that **Frameline** plans to announce they're pruning back the 2004 edition of the **SF Lesbian & Gay Film Festival** next June to two weeks, from this year's high of three weeks. The longer and more spaced-out schedule worked well for our coverage of the film fest, as we had more issues to cover more programs. But evidently the logistics of such a long fest were nightmarish for staff. Look for Frameline to add a third venue in order to accommodate a larger number of simultaneous screenings. Sources say the Roxie Cinema has already been asked to return to the fold come Junetime.

Over on 16th St., the new screening room to be known as the "Little Roxie" is set to open soon next door to the "Big Roxie." Word is that Roxie management has decided to go ahead and make the new bathrooms unisex/trans-friendly. During the recent **Tranny Fest**, the Big Roxie had signs on the potty doors saying all genders were welcome. That's always what we like to see, inclusion.

Applause meter

Theatre Rhino opens its holiday offerings this Saturday night with a one-time staple of the Bay Area stage, the always festive *Christmas With the Crawfords*. *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* theatre critic **Erika Milvy** remembers that the last time it played in SF, in 1998, she was at opening night

to review the show. After one of the spirited production numbers, the audience applauded vigorously. Although Milvy enjoyed the number, she did not clap, because that's what New York critics *don't* do. The actor playing **Joan Crawford** looked right at her and commanded, "Clap, bitch!" Milvy reports she put her hands together for every song after that. Ticket info for *Crawfords* at therhino.org.

In a similarly stagi vein, this week's Decca release of the Broadway cast recording from *The Boy from Oz*, that word-of-mouth musical starring Aussie hunk **Hugh Jackman** as gay showman **Peter Allen**, leads us to wonder who in the

world we're gonna get out here in the boonies when the show finally comes around in the Best of Broadway series, say in (the ways things are going) 2008. Will showstopper **Nathan Lane** still be spry enough? We've heard he can play gay.

That '70s show

SF photographer **Dan Nicoletta** worked in **Harvey Milk's** camera store in the Castro in the '70s. He'll show slides and share Harvey stories on Wed., Nov. 26, from 5-8 p.m., at the SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St. Free admission for Center members; guests welcome (donations accepted, no one turned away for lack of funds). After the slide show: Qs & As with special guests about how Harvey's life and death impacted them personally. Attendees will be encouraged to share. Info at sfcenter.org.

Ballzapoppin'

Out There has often heard that desire is the first step on the road to ruin, but for Under One Roof volunteer **Jok Church**, it led to charity. *Church* is obsessed with *Raging Stallion* porn composer/star emeritus **JD Slater**. So when Slater stopped by the store, Church gifted him with a set of chrome bocce balls — which, in typical porn-world fashion, ended up popping out of some dude's posterior in the aptly-named *Rear End Collision*.

Now *Raging Stallion* hosts a benefit for Under One Roof, itself a charitable organization, at the Eagle Tavern 8-11 p.m. this Saturday night, Nov. 22. In attendance,

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MUSIC

Powerhouse performance

Violinist Sarah Chang with SF Symphony

by Philip Campbell

Michael Tilson Thomas will be on hiatus from the San Francisco Symphony until the first week in December, but some exciting guest conductors have been keeping things interesting in his absence. When he returns to Davies Hall for an all-Stravinsky program, the orchestra will be all warmed up and ready to go.

The repertoire in recent weeks has been out of the ordinary without proving too much for conservative listeners; and the guest artists, two excellent young violinists, have been exceptional.



Chang: deepened interpretations

Actually, Sarah Chang was much more than that. Her powerhouse performance of the Shostakovich Violin Concerto No. 1 last week was the highlight of the season thus far.

At only 21, Chang has grown up in every way. The charming prodigy who wowed us with the Paganini First in 1993, at the ripe old age of 12, has suddenly become a woman. Her physical allure is matched by a deepened interpretive maturity; and the already famous technical facility has now been honed to an almost unbelievable degree.

In the Shostakovich Concerto, the long lyrical line of the opening Nocturne and the slow-building intensity of the third movement Passacaglia require more than mastery from the soloist. There must be a bond with the conductor to grasp the complex

music and still make a dramatic statement.

Chang was attentive to Roberto Abbado's convincing lead and excelled in an outpouring of affecting emotion that also made musical sense. The bitingly witty Scherzo and dizzying Burlesca finale ask even more of the violinist physically.

Shostakovich was fairly bursting with good ideas in the long First Concerto, and he merrily turned the final movement into something like an Olympic event. Getting through it without fainting deserves admiration; turning it on its head earns a standing ovation.

Audiences seem all too willing to rise and applaud for almost every performance these days, but there are times when it is simply a spontaneous reaction. Chang earned one of the longest and most enthusiastic ovations in several seasons, and it was a pleasure to be part of the tribute.

Conductor Roberto Abbado (nephew of the more famous Claudio) collaborated in the stirring event, but was naturally eclipsed by Chang. He opened the evening with Bruno Maderna's brief, challenging *Aura*, and finished with the old crowd-pleaser *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Splash down

It is good that another young violinist, James Ehnes, made his SFS debut the week before. Following Chang would have erased the memory, even though he did make a considerable splash on his own.

Returning guest conductor David Robertson brought some wonderful works of the 20th century with him, and provided a snazzy setting for the violinist in Kurt Weill's Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra, Opus 12.

Also a relative youngster (he is 27), Ehnes has an elegant stage presence and impressive command. The Weill concerto is an exuberant example of the work from a fledgling composer, a fitting and offbeat choice for the Canadian artist's Bay Area debut.

The easy melodic appeal of Weill's later stage works is not immediately apparent, but the jazzy syncopation and lemony harmonies are trademarks. Ehnes relied on a warm tone and steady rhythmic technique to maintain a



Robertson: a plusher tone

cogent balance. Musicians and audience alike shared a whale of a time and rewarded the soloist with genuine enthusiasm.

Robertson opened the bill with another SFS first, Steve Reich's remarkably touching *Different Trains*. Essentially a memory piece, the composer juxtaposes images of American children riding trains in the safety of the States during the 1930s and '40s next to European Jews being transported to the camps.

The piece was originally written for the Kronos Quartet; Robertson employed the version for string orchestra. The plusher tone and somewhat labored approach of the SFS strings detracted a little from the piece's profound impact, but the recorded spoken texts lost none of their poignancy. The final effect was more than equal to Reich's moving meditation.

Robertson concluded the program with a boisterous reading of Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*. The composer favored a drier, leaner approach, and the opening movement could have benefited from a little less bravado. Still, the sheer energy of the conductor's interpretation was irresistible.

MTT might be a little jealous if he knew how well things have been going, but he would more likely be proud of his orchestra. The season is sailing into the holidays with a satisfying momentum, and his return to the podium with more Stravinsky is highly anticipated. ▼

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◀ previous page

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Charles Busch's 'You Should Be So Lucky' at NCTC

by Richard Dodds

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show off photos of his before-and-after masterpiece. That was when he artfully removed the muttonchops from a woman so that she no longer resembled Johnny Cash whenever she dressed in black. In his spare time, of which he has plenty, the reclusive Christopher paints goblin faces on dried yams.

"My superficiality is very complex," he moans to a stranger at the start of the erratically amusing *You Should Be So Lucky*. In Charles Busch's 1994 comedy, now at New Conservatory Theatre Center, that stranger turns out to be Christopher's fairy godfather — in the Cinderella sense of fairy.

True, Christopher is gay, but he is so neurotically repressed that sexual orientation is more a matter of memory than practice. Playwright Busch created the role as a change of pace and gender for himself, though he has said he found it less satisfying than portraying the drag divas for which he is best-known. The play itself feels like the bridge between such Busch camp classics as *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* and *Psycho Beach Party* and the quirky but gender-wise mainstream hit *Tale of the Allergist's Wife* that was soon to come.

This straddling style makes for some bumpy moments, as does an often clumsy structure, making it a navigational challenge that is unevenly met in director Christopher Jenkins' production. It doesn't feel like the director and his cast trusted the material, and they hammer at a lot of jokes better left as casual asides.

The plot is a screwball affair, set into motion when good-Samaritan Christopher offers an elderly man a place to rest after he has fainted outside his tchotchke-infested apartment. Soon Mr. Rosenberg, a widower estranged from his married daughter, turns to Christopher for a surrogate son. The old man showers



(Left to right:) Patrick Michael Dukeman and Camilla Busnovetsky

Christopher with gifts, including Cinderella-like access to a black-tie charity ball, where he meets his future prince, a struggling press agent.

Splitting hairs

But first there is the awkward matter of Mr. Rosenberg's possible death by electrolysis, which leads to a police investigation when it turns out that the deceased had left half of his \$20 million estate to Christopher. Mr. Rosenberg's shrew-daughter wants the whole inheritance, and somehow the whole affair winds up on an Oprah-like talk show where the trembling Christopher gets support from his press agent/boyfriend, his flamboyantly dramatic sister, and even Mr. Rosenberg's ghost.

Patrick Michael Dukeman can become too studied in his approach to Christopher, but in other moments he is irresistibly zany, especially as he channels the spirits of various ghosts. Christopher can also lash out when certain buttons are pushed, but these emotional surges don't quite work. A similar problem faces

Scott Cox, whose boyishly pleasant manner doesn't have the edge to give the press agent the neurotically comic life indicated in the dialogue.

Christopher's sister, a character whose dramatic need in the play is questionable, is nevertheless played to the hilt by Camilla Busnovetsky as a mix of a young Katharine Hepburn and Jennifer Saunders in *AbFab*. Adrienne Krug comes on strong as the pull-out-the-stops suburban bitch who is Mr. Rosenberg's daughter. Richard Wenzel is nice enough as Mr. Rosenberg, but something is lacking. There are several choice moments in Laura Smith as the Oprah clone.

Looking back at whole thing, *You Should Be So Lucky* is never less than a genial affair, and at times a comically inspired one. It has a heart even when its head is in a mess. ▼

You Should Be So Lucky will run at the New Conservatory Theatre Center through Jan. 4. Tickets are \$18-\$28. Call 861-8972 or go to nctcsf.org.

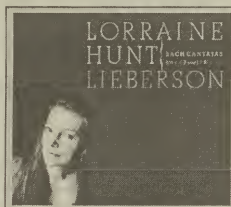
Mesmerizing mezzos

by Tim Pfaff

The only criticism that could be leveled at Nonesuch's new CD of Bach's solo cantatas "Ich habe genug" and "Mein Herz schwimmt um Blut," with Lorraine Hunt Lieberman, is that it is not a DVD preserving the Peter Sellars stagings of the pieces with this singular singing actress. Fortunately, there's no loss of drama in the mezzo's probing interpretations of these two great works.

Hunt Lieberman's penchant for dramatic acuity, long familiar to Bay Area audiences, shuns theatrics for their own sake. While she hardly stints on a score's "big moments," her gift is the way she inhabits scores, crawling so deeply inside the music that everything unessential disappears, giving the listener-viewer a naked encounter with the work. It is a capacity given to the few, but Hunt Lieberman seems able to do nothing but. It's that last step of greatness beyond honest artistry to authentic experience.

Doubtless the artist's own encounter with cancer has deepened



her response to "Ich habe genug," Bach's most famous solo cantata and a seminal work about the acceptance of death. But artists with less subtlety than Hunt Lieberman have performed it as if incorrectly understanding its title, rendering it as "I've had enough" rather than, as the cantata's text plainly says, "I have enough." There's a world of expression in this singer's account of the text that goes far beyond Kübler-Ross' charting of the psychological stages of dying.

The mezzo's alertness to the fine points of text are nowhere more apparent than in the famous lullaby, "Schlummert ein," a deceptively complex piece at the heart of the cantata. Generations

of singers have, understandably, made it the consolatory core of this psychologically harrowing work. While Hunt Lieberman lends the music its requisite liquidity and emotional resolve, she also exposes into the reality of the ongoing suffering ("Here I must build up misery/But there, I will see/Sweet peace, quiet rest") for what it is. Without a hint of fussiness, she renders the multifaceted movement in all its dimensions.

The sheer richness and depth of her vocal palette allow for startling effects. In the final aria, Bach sets the word "Tod" on low notes that fall out of the musical line prominently. Hunt Lieberman gives mezzo profundo depth to each of these soundings of the word for "death," investing them with specific if constantly shifting feelings — while rendering the music's excitement with bracing, immaculate coloratura. Accounts of Sellars' stagings of the other cantata, "My Heart Swims in Blood," make this meditation on personal remorse and liberation from guilt sound particularly appealing. In it, the director, who

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OPERA

Sex and death and Shostakovich

SFO's superb 'Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk'

by Stephanie von Buchau

San Francisco Opera missed an opportunity when it didn't include *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in its gay, lesbian and transgender "Night at the Opera" package. This scabrous work by Dmitri Shostakovich is a festive crowdpleaser. Oh, you don't think sex and murder are festive? That puts in you in bed with that old party-pooper, Joe Stalin, who heard *Lady Macbeth* shortly after it opened in Leningrad in 1934 and was shocked, I tell you, shocked by its graphic sex. (Somehow I don't think he was disturbed by the murders—that was his profession, after all.)

How graphic is the sex? Well, in the new SFO production, originally from Stuttgart, visually not very. When Katerina (Solveig Kringleborn) and her new lover Sergei (Christopher Ventris) finally fall in each other's arms (it's taken them about three minutes to get acquainted), director Johannes Schaaf takes his cue from the composer and marches the brass band that accompanies their coupling onstage. The lovers stand there like an embracing statue while the trombones do their shocking detumescent thing.

Somehow one gets the feeling that Stalin was more musical than he let on, because you know they didn't depict coitus on stage in 1934 Soviet Union. Ergo, even Uncle Joe could hear what those lowdown trombones were up to. It is one of the most hilarious moments in all opera, but I believe that Shostakovich meant it as an ironic comment on Katerina's introduction to rough sex, not a condemnation of her natural animal instincts.

You see, everybody starts talking about *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* by protesting that even though Katerina eventually kills three people while trying to hold on to the feckless Sergei, she's really a sympathetic victim. No kidding. I've never thought of her as evil, but always as a hapless obsessive, so starved for love of any kind that she mistakes sex for finer feelings, of which Sergei has none. Shostakovich clearly loves Katerina; he completely empathizes with her. And his brass band is not having fun at her expense, no matter what the Stuttgart Ironists seem to think.

Blowzy job

I speak familiarly of Katerina because I first heard the opera in 1964, when SFO gave the American premiere of *Katerina Ismailova*, the revised version of *Lady Macbeth* that Shostakovich felt compelled to provide, proving his loyalty to the Communist state. In the 1960s, even in English and with a blowzy British heroine, the piece still blew me away. It is so right on about what happens when you give your heart to the wrong person; and it has a fantastic orchestration, even bowdlerized by its own composer.

SFO then did the right thing by producing it again in 1981, this time in the true original Russian version, with the great singing actress Anja Silja in the title role and Oakland's wunderkind Calvin



Solveig Kringleborn (Katerina) and Christopher Ventris (Sergei)

Simmons in the pit. It was Calvin's greatest triumph at SFO. Silja gave herself a sponge bath while singing her first aria, and my Dad was hooked for life; he had no idea opera could be so sexy.

I doubt if he would have been so taken with Kringleborn. She's a handsome woman with a voluptuous figure, but she hasn't one-tenth of Silja's erotic stage presence, nor half the German soprano's volume. Kringleborn, alas, struck me as another of those singers favored by SFO general director Pamela Rosenberg: shapely, decent actress, good musician but lacking divine fire, larger-than-life stage presence and, for want of a better phrase, "star power." I didn't dislike her, but she just seemed too wan for such an obsessive character.

On the other hand, the object of her obsession certainly would have inspired me to murder. Ventris sang and acted beautifully as Parsifal in the summer of 2000, but he was born to play Shostakovich's rough, ambitious, oversexed farmhand. Bulky, hairy and sweaty, he resembles the Oakland A's ex-first baseman Jason Giambi. I wonder if he has tats like Jason. Let's not mince words, possums, this guy is sex on a stick. He also has a strong, vibrant tenor, though it is difficult to concentrate on hearing him when you are goggling at those biceps. And, oh yes, S&M fantasists, did I mention that Sergei gets flogged onstage?

Everything in this opera happens onstage, including all three richly deserved murders. The husband Zinoviy (Vsevolod Grivnov) has to go because he's a whiny lickspittle who stands in the way of creative sex between his wife Katerina and the new farmworker Sergei. The slutty convict Sonyetka (Jane Dutton), whom Katerina ruthlessly drowns on the way to Siberia, has to go because she's a stone bitch who not only steals Sergei's "affections" and Katerina's last pair of warm stockings, but then brags about it and taunts our miserable heroine.

No murder in this opera is more deserved than that of Katerina's lecherous father-in-law, Boris (Vladimir Vanev). Domineering, sadistic, paranoid, he craves mushrooms at Midnight,

and Katerina obliges by mixing them with rat poison. (Maybe Uncle Joe saw himself in Boris.) Vanev was magnificently malignant, with a huge, Slavic basso and weighty but nimble stage presence. The rest of the cast of 20-odd characters was superb, as were conductor Donald Runnicles and Ian Robertson's chorus, nowhere more so than on the doleful trek to Siberia. ▼

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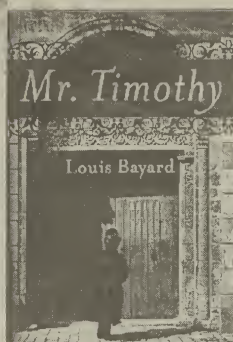
A queer young man

by Robert Julian

Mr. Timothy by Louis Bayard;
HarperCollins, \$24.95

Poor Tiny Tim — trapped on the pages of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and saddled for all eternity with the kind of cherubic sweetness that makes some readers lurch for insulin. But fear no more. In Louis Bayard's ingenious sequel, *Mr. Timothy*, Tim is all grown up, and, although burdened with a host of insecurities and familial conflicts, Tim's gunnin' for bear.

In 1860 London, Timothy Cratchit is a proud young man, somewhat down on his luck. His adopted "Uncle N," known to the world at large as Ebenezer Scrooge, is his patron. But Timothy would rather do things his way, without begging for help. Yet a literate education does not fully compensate for his impoverished financial situation and shabby wardrobe. And Timothy's good intentions and pleasant demeanor have not enabled him to overcome the embarrassment that accompanies his pronounced limp. Then there are those ghosts he keeps seeing. His dead father appears in various locations around London, at the most unexpected times. Spirited apparitions seem to run in the Cratchit family.



Finally, there is the unexplored issue of Timothy's sexual proclivities. He casually refers to only one sexual experience with a woman, and he is regularly insulted by those who suggest women might not be his sexual partners of choice. On occasion, Timothy still longs for the return of a former male tutor whose devotion to young Tiny Tim crossed the line to such an extent that the tutor was fired.

Given these issues, it should surprise no one when, in the beginning of *Mr. Timothy*, we find Tim residing in a brothel. Although hired as a bookkeeper, his real job is to teach the madam to read, while he studiously avoids any intimate encounters with the prostitutes. He's a moody soul, and when a des-

perate 10-year-old street urchin named Philomela catches his eye, Timothy feels the need to assist her. To these ends, he enlists the support of a young vagabond named Colin the Melodious who seems to have emerged full-blown from the pages of *Oliver Twist*.

Author Louis Bayard begins his latest novel with a light-hearted tone that belies a darkness that is yet to come. By the middle of *Mr. Timothy*, the smoldering excesses of Victorian London bubble to the surface of her grimy streets. Murder, larceny, perjury, rape, and kidnapping take stage center. And as 10-year-old girls are sold into prostitution, a seemingly innocuous, whimsical novel turns into a thoroughly engrossing thriller.

Bayard is a wonderful writer, and *Mr. Timothy* is a great page-turner that successfully wraps spiritual and literary leitmotifs into a brilliantly original narrative. As a Sherlock Holmes-meets-*The Silence of the Lambs* hybrid, *Mr. Timothy* could be the perfect stocking-stuffer for a literate friend whose genial bonhomie masks a darker personal nature. ▼

Louis Bayard will read from *Mr. Timothy* at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 21, at Cody's Books in Berkeley. He will also read the following day, Nov. 22, at 2 p.m. at M Is for Mystery in San Mateo.

Molto mezzos

◀ page 28

has done some of his best work with Hunt Lieberman, made extensive use of the highly abstract, Asian-theater-based gestures that have alienated his detractors while always moving me (and eliciting particularly memorable performances from Hunt Lieberman).

Shorn of all visuals, Hunt Lieberman's performance of this yet more complex work is no less astonishing. It has an even broader range of expression, and more vocal fireworks, but the singer's precise sense of relative proportion allow both text and music to emerge with untrammelled power. Michael Steinberg's typically sentimental note about her accompa-

nying musicians, Boston's Orchestra of Emanuel Music (in which she once played viola) under Craig Nelson (another frequent collaborator), acknowledges what is, in fact, stirring musical partnership.

French waves

From her roots in early music, Hunt Lieberman has gone on to major triumphs as Berlioz's Didon at the Met and Debussy's Mélisande at Carnegie. I considered swimming the Pacific for the latter. In her new CD, *French Arias* (DG), Czech mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kozená seems to be following a similar path. While this gifted young woman does not yet wield Hunt Lieberman's communicative powers, developments on both vocal and artistic fronts



clearly audible on this beguiling CD make the move, if it is that, seem savvy. The voice, solid as ever at its core, continues to ripen, with notable gains in depth, complexity, and individuality.

There's as much frappé as tartare in the repertoire, but that's French music for you, and Kozená leaves no doubt that she knows how to handle both. In this, she is ideally partnered by the Mahler Chamber Orchestra under Marc Minkowski, whose unerring sense of idiom makes his ventures beyond his own early-music base more convincing.

If you leave some time between Hunt Lieberman's scorching coloratura and the frippery of Auber's "Flamme vengresse," which opens this CD, there's room to admire both, and the sheer agility and charm of Kozená's singing. She wisely limits her excursions into Carmen and Verdi's Eboli to those femme fatales' bubblier moments — but they exude character. The beguiling excerpts from Massenet's *Cléopâtre* and Cendrillon suggest some bona fide new career paths. ▼

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FILM

Soap opera à la Claude Chabrol

Petal-pushing in 'The Flower of Evil'

by Will Shank

They are a very French family. They smoke. They kiss each other on both cheeks, on the forehead, or on one cheek only, upon entering or leaving the room. The only exception to all of the familial smooching in *The Flower of Evil* is the interaction between the handsome father (Gérard, played by Bernard Le Coq) and the sexy son (François, *The Piano Teacher's* Benoit Magimel). These two awkwardly grasp one another's shoulders, even upon first reuniting after a four-year separation, during which François was in America. He has just returned, "as if I had never been gone," to his haute-bourgeois family manse in Bourdeaux, and to a whodunit soap opera that is about to take place there.

If this is indeed a soap, it is a very sophisticated one in the hands of veteran director Claude Chabrol, whose 50th film this is. Sexual tension erupts in the first reel when François first catches a glimpse of his gorgeous stepsister Michele (Mélanie Doutey), who is also his first cousin. The two clearly cannot wait to get their hands on each other, and this is the least of the semi-incestuous

intrigues that happen beneath the roofs of the various *maisons* of the Charpin-Vasseur family.

The father, a pharmacist, appears to be *schtupping* his female customers in his second-story office. François' stepmother Anne (played by veteran screen actress Nathalie Baye) is running for mayor of the town, but her campaign is haunted by a malicious hate campaign that opens up several closets, including one involving an unsolved murder, in her family. Even sweet old Aunt Micheline ("Tante Line," played by Suzanne Flon), the wrinkled lady who serves up the *boeuf bourguignon* (and is wise to the love affair between the young cousins), has a secret, which is slowly revealed in flashbacks and voice-over ghosts from her past.

Chabrol was one of the original gang of the *nouvelle vague* (New Wave) of young directors who changed the face of French cinema in the 1950s and '60s. He is often, in fact, given credit for defining this term for a bunch of creative filmmakers (including Godard, Truffaut, Rohmer) who actually had little in common, stylistically. Beginning as a cinéaste whose gripping psychological studies like *Les Biches* (1969), with its theme of bisexu-

ality, set the world on its head, young Chabrol evolved into a respected middle-aged director of such solid and safe fare as the 1991 version of *Madame Bovary* with Isabelle Huppert.

With *The Flower of Evil*, the 73-year-old writer-director proves that he still has his touch with this taut screenplay, whose closest American cousin is Kenneth Branagh's *Dead Again*. The musical soundtrack floats in and out only when necessary to create dramatic tension, or to revive the past through a nostalgic '40s ballad, "Un Souvenir." The complex, three-generation family history of intermarriage and intrigue could use a family tree (in fact, one was provided in the press notes), but the details are irrelevant. Chabrol's irreverent theme, as well as his criticism of bourgeois life, is stated by one of the characters: "Time does not exist. Life is one perpetual present." Now playing. ▼



Semi-incestuous intrigues go on under the roof of the family maison.



What do theatre patrons reveal to each other in the dark in Nolot's film?

Porn Theatre

◀ Arts cover

Mood swings

Porn Theatre was born out of its creator's grief following the death of his adopted son; in the film, this grief becomes a state of mourning for the catastrophe that AIDS has wrought on the generation of Nolot's ex-gigolo, whose moods swing from suicidal to voyeuristic to orgiastic. Nolot notes in an interview that his sexual ideal is the three-way: two women and a man, or two men and a woman. In this spirit, much of the vivid sexplay on display is initiated by the transvestite characters, who, despite their beer guts and saggy jowls, come on to their tricks as if they were the Florence Nightingales of cocksucking. "Do I suck as well as your wife?"

Olivier Torres is haunting as an aging transvestite, decrying his clients as the men with "fragile rectums," men who can't bare too close a glimpse of their true desires. Like the chorus from an especially randy modern opera, *Porn Theatre* reveals what its patrons have to say to each other in

the dark. That cute guy, who seems a dream come true, turns out to be just another working girl. "It's a bargain. I used to charge a 100 [francs] in the army."

Nolot's ex-gigolo survives by treating each visit to the theatre as if it were an army combat mission. His extra-large trousers are equipped with zippered compartments for stashing money, lube, and two sizes of condoms. Like Bogart's Rick, he has his own personal code, with its hard-bitten romanticism. "What is sad is when a friend dies, it reassures me. It's not my turn yet." He lets a young army vet come on his chest with the same seeming nonchalance that Bogart displays when he permits the young Hungarian woman to beat his roulette wheel: as if he knew that the "devil [still] has these people by the throat."

Inevitably, the joint is raided; and, as in *Casablanca*, only the usual suspects are led away, young Arab men caught without identity papers, the cynical Paris cops snarling as they file out with their prey. "Why don't those faggots go to see gay films?" ▼

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Queers on TV: they're one in a million

by Victoria A. Brownworth

The cover of this month's *Vanity Fair*, white-on-white and ultra-hip, addresses the "queer TV boom"—nicely timed to promo shows for November sweeps month, but we're not cynical. Since *Queer Eye* became a mega-hit and Ellen DeGeneres returned to network TV, only the most conservative media outlets have ignored what *TV Guide* and other industry publications have dubbed a trend. The *Vanity Fair* piece implies that TV is so queer that at any point during the day or night, one can catch queer TV. Of course, as often as HBO reruns its programming, that may actually be true, but it would mean watching the same episodes of *Queer Eye* over and over like some gay *Groundhog Day*.

The reality, however, is that queers are not as omnipresent on TV as the straight media (or the right-wing ideologues sounding the cymbals of Leviticus) would have one believe. But those who monitor trends in TV for a living can count. Ten percent of the population is queer. There is no representative 10% of TV programming. The so-called queer TV explosion is a white-flamer surge. Look around for lesbian TV; can't find it? And are there queers of color on TV other than on HBO's *Six Feet Under*?

Did we miss the all-black cover of *Vanity Fair* about the new black trend on TV when UPN hit big, or the multihued



cover with the Latino trend when Univision became the most popular network in the US? Perhaps those cover stories were scrapped as too provocative or simply too insulting because race, unlike being queer, is a "lifestyle?"

Tokenism does not make a trend, nor does one ratings grabber. It's not enough to have one queer on a program, like Bill Brochtrup's character John on *NYPD Blue*. Brochtrup has been a regular on the Emmy-winning ABC drama for years, and but for a brief flutter last season, has had no real storyline in that time. Why? Brochtrup's character most often acts as a conduit to queer-themed shows, which *Blue* does several times a season, but not always in a positive way. Otherwise, he is purely window-dressing.

The facts of so-called queer TV are not as thrilling as the sexy *Vanity Fair* cover would presume. One fact is the trendiness factor.

This neither makes for good TV (witness ABC's unfunny *It's All Relative*) nor for solid TV, by which we mean lasting presence in the overall TV landscape. For example, reality TV shows are here to stay, but very few have series longevity; most are one-season wonders. Perhaps *Queer Eye* will be a several-season success, but at some point, viewers will tire of the novelty, and ratings will go down, as they have for even the best reality shows like *Survivor* and *The Bachelor*.

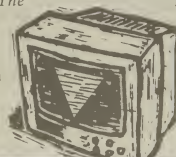
The only spots with longevity for queers on TV are on sitcoms and dramas, TV's reliable staples. *Will & Grace* remains the one true queer TV show because it's all-queer, all the time, and, unlike *Relative*, it's hilarious. Bruce Vilanch and Ellen DeGeneres can do *Hollywood Squares* till the cows come home, but their presence will not have the impact a longstanding queer character (with a storyline) can have. Regular characters on non-queer (that is, non-specialized) programming are what will drive home the reality to straights that queers are a majority minority in the US. Showing *Queer Eye* around the clock can't do that, because to straight America, that show and the Fab Five are anomalies. They don't know trendy queer decorators. But they might have a queer office-mate like

Brochtrup on *Blue*. Only full integration into the TV landscape will create a real queer TV trend.

Educating Oprah

Witness last week's surprise comments by Oprah, who blessedly has returned to serious subjects for at least half of her shows. The savvy and super-sophisticated talk show diva asked, with utter straight sincerity, on an episode devoted to revealing secrets: "Is anyone still in the closet?"

I mean, you have *Queer Eye* and *Will & Grace* and all those other shows." But a young lesbian who had just shown part of her short film on coming out, and a gay NFL player who was appearing with his lover and explaining



Lavender Tube

why he finally came out on a TV sports show, were politely shocked by Oprah's ignorance. Both explained why so many queers remain in the closet, and how hard it remains to be queer. Much as we love it, *Queer Eye* has no impact whatsoever on that fact.

More doesn't necessarily mean better when it comes to queer TV. Last week's sweeps episode of *Law & Order: SVU* was terrific, dealing as it did with homophobia, reparative therapy and anti-gay murder. It included a Rev. Fred Phelps character, as well as a theorist who posited that being queer was arrested development. The episode put the whole reparative-therapy scene on trial. It starred Oscar nominee George Segal and Michael Boatman, both cast radically against type. The show also had series regulars talk about their feelings about queerness. Watching the detectives seeking to avenge the murder of a queer just as strongly as if he had been a straight victim was *real* queer TV. But in the trial aspect of the show, the drama centered on the victim's lover, the closeted son of a reparative theorist, and the queer victim was lost in the dramatic shuffle. In the end, although the killer was convicted, the murder victim was forgotten.

In past weeks, ABC's *The Practice* has been delving into the queer scene from another unsavory angle, racism, portraying two white supremacists as re-

pressed homosexuals. But isn't this a variation on *Basic Instinct*, where the queers are killers (a rarity in real life)? The same might be said of the season opener for *NYPD Blue*, which featured a pedophile who preyed on boys and was a killer.

We have to be careful what we wish for. On network as well as cable TV, queer stereotypes remain the norm, not the exception. There's a vast straight wasteland out there in TV-land. Where is the GLBT version of *Malcolm in the Middle*, or the replacements for the young queer characters on the now-defunct *Buffy*, the *Vampire Slayer* and *Dawson's Creek*? Those queer characters were central to those shows and reached the teen audience desperate for role models on the tube. Where are the lesbians and queers of color? Not every queer is represented by the Fab Five or Jack on *W&G*. *ER* is fabulous this season, but what happened to Laura Innes' character Kerri Weaver's relationship with her Latina lover Sandy, and their struggle to have a baby?

Let's hope we continue to see more queer TV on *Oprah*, too. Last week, Melissa Etheridge and Dolly Parton did a duet together, which was such high-dyke camp. Etheridge also discussed her recent marriage to her new bride. Parton quipped that she was definitely for queer marriage, because "y'all should have to suffer like we do." On this episode of *Oprah*, which featured major women music artists, each discussed her personal life. Thus Etheridge was part of the canvas, not in a specialized, "explaining the queer lifestyle" role. That works.

Finally, can we just embrace the concept that Private Jessica Lynch was made a pawn of the Bush Administration, and stop vilifying her? The young woman will likely never walk again without aid, suffered tremendous injuries including rape, and none of it would have happened were she not deployed to Iraq. Lynch seemed to be sincere and down-to-earth in the Diane Sawyer exclusive on Veteran's Day. One can only lament how changed (not for the better) her life and the lives of all the other young soldiers who have been sent to Iraq have been. Think Lynch isn't heroic? How many members of Congress have stood up to the Bush Iraq doctrine the way she has? ▼

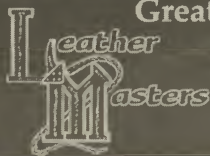
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Then and now

by Bob Roehr

Last week, *Cold Case*, the CBS drama set in Philadelphia that looks at unsolved crimes, reopened the beating death of a young athlete in an alley near a gay bar in 1964. "I think the police swept this one under the rug," Danny's mother says, "and my husband and I helped them do it. We didn't push." She was seeking knowledge and closure.

"Danny" was a star on the University of Pennsylvania baseball team. The story was told by those who knew him, through a series of black-and-white flashbacks richly evocative of an era of underground clubs run by the Mafia, police raids and harassment, and the fear that was the closet.

The tension and violence was real, but so, too, were the strength and camaraderie of gay men and women to survive those times. It comes through in the defiance and humor of "Tinkerbell," then a tiara-wearing black diva, now an aging and portly drag queen. It was also in the anguish of Danny's boyfriend, now a prominent judge, who said, "In some ways, Danny was ahead of his time. He didn't hate himself."

The episode was an extremely powerful and moving window into gay life then and now. Be sure to catch it on a repeat. ▼

Imaginary landscapes

Chris Marker films give play at the Castro Theatre

by David Lamble

Filmmaker Chris Marker must be one of France's best-kept secrets. Perhaps the oddity of his birthplace — Ulan Bator, Mongolia — and the length of his given name — Christian Francois Bouche-Villeneuve — provided the incentive for an early mid-life crisis. Already a successful writer with a novel to his credit in his thirties, he took a life-changing detour into film, beginning by collaborating on documentaries with Alain Resnais (*Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *Last Year at Marienbad*). It was a partnership that probably heightened his fascination with the mysteries of how humans cope with the confusing dualities of time and memory.

Although technically a member of the French New Wave, Marker's insistence on combining the personal essay with a cinema verite style of nonfiction filmmaking has rendered him much less of a household name than his flashier fiction peers Truffaut, Godard or Rohmer.

The Castro Theatre's double bill of *Sans Soleil* and *La Jetée* (November 21-27) gives us Chris Marker at the top of his form in two astonishingly different films.

At first glance, the 1982 *Sans Soleil*, or literally *Sunless*, could be viewed as one of the screen's most eclectic travelogues, consisting as it does of Marker's impressions of modern Tokyo, Iceland, and the African nation of Guinea-Bissau, with an odd excursion in search of Hitchcock's San Francisco locations for *Vertigo*.

Marker devotes much of the film to visually arresting if wildly eccentric observations about modern Japanese culture. In scenes that would not feel out of place in Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*, Marker cruises through the baffling, Big Brother-like videoscape of modern Tokyo, adding, "The more you watch Japanese television, the more you feel it's watching you."

Marker notes the Japanese zest

for concocting religious-like ceremonies for everyday problems, such as Tokyo's memorial to lost cats, or "a ceremony where broken dolls are burned in public. I looked at their faces [and saw] the same look as the look on the faces of the kamikaze pilots."

He depicts Tokyo's faddish and zombie-like youth culture, with its unofficial early retirement age, and shows a Japanese model doing a spooky impersonation of the late President John F. Kennedy in a department-store fashion show, complete with soundtrack: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." The filmmaker then drops a telling aside: "My dreams find expression in the department stores of Tokyo."

If you find yourself wondering where all this is headed, in the end Marker makes a coherent philosophical statement linking Japan's ancient warlike traditions (samurai fighters) to the most recent and ephemeral fads. "The Pac Man is the perfect video embodiment of man's fate," he says. "It's Japan that could be the fulfillment of the French writers who wanted divorce to be a sacrament."

Airport novel

Marker's 30-minute short *La Jetée* is a *Beyond the Twilight Zone*-quality science-fiction tale set in Paris' Orly Airport. A man who has witnessed the outbreak of World War III is interrogated by scientists in an underground bunker where the survivors of the catastrophe have retreated. Gradually, under the influence of drugs, he recalls a memory of the day of the attack, when he glimpsed a startling incident at the airport.

"Only later did he realize that he saw a man die. Soon afterwards, Paris was blown up." Marker tells the short fable in a mesmerizingly beautiful series of black-and-white and not entirely still photographs, which lend a haunting quality. ▼

Opens Friday.



Sans Soleil: an array of visually arresting images in an eclectic travelogue.

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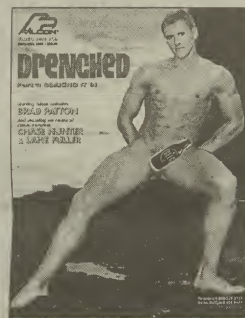
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Left coast sash zone sizzles

by Mister Marcus

From Vancouver all the way down to San Diego, last weekend saw a hot trail of leather sashes and titles bestowed on outstanding contenders. Yes, the Left Coast is alive, well and sizzling from top to bottom.

Titles were doled out in Vancouver, British Columbia, in the Russian River City of Guerneville, at Pistons in Long Beach, and to a woman contender in San Diego.

Rob Cole prevailed in Vancouver on Saturday night. The details I received are sketchy, so it is unclear whether Mr. Cole will advance to IML or the new Canadian Leather Man title.

A few hundred miles south of Vancouver, in the Northern California oasis of Guerneville, an enthusiastic crowd appeared. Leather Weekend was taking place, with various people conducting workshops, a meet & greet, a dungeon party, and the Mr. North Coast Leather competition.

Graylin Thornton was the master of ceremonies in a contest with four men competing for the title: Eric Edelstein, Arnie House, Michael Myhand and Lee Young.

The leather empress Snatch provided some sexy entertainment, and the audience was in stitches at the comedy routine put forth by comic Mark Uryga.

When the dust settled after the leather image, speeches, jock competition and questions onstage, Eric Edelstein, a hunk from Santa Rosa, emerged the winner. He now advances to compete for IML next May in Chicago.

Scot Howard stepped aside with a seven-minute speech, which opened with the sound bites from "Sunset Boulevard." The audience roared its approval and gave him a standing ovation.

Long Beach & San Diego

The competition headed southward then to the only



Eric Edelstein of Santa Rosa, California won the Mr. North Coast Leather 2004 title last Saturday, November 15 in Guerneville. He advances to compete at International Mister Leather in Chicago next May.

leather bar in Long Beach, California where that living hunk Kurt Pierce stepped aside for a successor to the Mr. Pistons Leather title.

Mark Malan served as the master of ceremonies; he was the first Mr. Pistons Leather and also the first runner-up at IML during his title year.

Again, the details I got are sketchy, but when it was all over, James Quiroga became Mr. Pistons Leather. He now advances to compete at IML in 2004.

That brings us to the beautiful city of San Diego where the women's leather community was hyped up to be a part of the 10th anniversary of the MS. San Diego Leather legend.

Kim and Annie managed to get virtually all segments of their community to be a part of it, with the imperial court, leather men and leather clubs, visiting major leather title holders (male and female) there for support.

The contest took place in the Gay/Lesbian Community Center of San Diego where an excited crowd gave loud cheers and encouragement to the three con-

tants.

After the judges' votes were counted, Karen Yew was chosen Ms. San Diego Leather, with "Stacey" the 1st runner-up, and "Lenette" the 2nd runner-up. And what a trio of cuties they are!

It was unclear whether Ms. Yew would advance to compete at IML or at ABW.

Victory brunches prevailed in all those cities on Sunday. Good show, everybody! And, Good Luck to all the winners!

A \$246,000 gift from Folsom Street Events

Earlier in the week, in downtown San Francisco, grateful non-profit service providers gathered at the Crowne Plaza Hotel where they were the happy beneficiaries of the Up Your Alley and Folsom Street fairs, the big leather events staged in July and September respectively.

Leather Pride was on full display as \$246,000 was distributed to all the beneficiaries by Folsom Street Events. Would you believe that at least three of the recipients didn't bother to show up to collect the largesse of Folsom Street Events? Nevertheless, volunteers and sponsors were thanked pro-

next page ►

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Week of November 20-26

Seven days of celebration at the DC Eagle in Washington for their 32nd anniversary, including Mr. DC Eagle contest. Larry Barat steps aside — he's a hunk, don't you think so Troy Anicete?

Saturday, November 22

The Men of Raging Stallion will be on hand at the Eagle Tavern from 2000-2300 with DVDs for sale and autographs at a benefit for Under One Roof. Lenny Broberg and Snatch will MC with help from Stop AIDS & Tweaker.org.

Golden Gate Guards celebrate 17th anniversary at Most Holy Redeemer Church from 1900-2200 with installation of new officers, refreshments. Entry by invitation or wearing your club overlay.

SF Leather Sir Tom Braddock's "Beyond Leader Dome" at Club Rendez-Vous at 2000 to benefit various AIDS agencies.

Sunday, November 23

Daddy's Bar and Mr. SF Leather Julian Marshburn present a \$7 beer/soda bust to benefit the Leather Archives & Museum from 1600 to 2000. Prizes, surprises.

Wednesday, November 26

Leather Buddies at 933 Harrison tonight. Strict dress code—no cologne, no white sneakers, and no attitude. For info: 777-HEAD.

Weekend, November 27-30

The 2004 edition of the Toronto Leather Man contest in that northern city of Canada. Maybe someone you know who used to live here is a contestant?

Friday, November 28

At the Bolt in Sacramento, Northern California Leather Sir Brian Williams presents "Precinct Night" — one of those arrest your buddy/sister/enemy for a stint in a jail cell — to raise money, of course! Law enforcement attire is encouraged.

Saturday, November 29

Dungeon Tour by Peter Fiske & Steve Gaynes. See various "private dungeons" in the city by bus and then attend The 15 Association monthly play party. For info, 415-673-0452 or email to: pfiske@peoplepc.com.

Mr. Hayes Valley Leather Darryl hosts "Guilty Pleasure Music Night" — act out your fave closeted tune at Marlena's from 2000 to midnight. Benefits New Leaf.

PORN

Dick delectation

by John F. Karr

You gotta have pity for straight guys. Most of them are really conflicted about getting into their dicks. You'd think they could bond over something so basic as dick pleasure. But it's the one thing they can't get from their buddies.

Unless their buddies are the ones that director Joe Gage has assembled for the first two volumes of the *Joe Gage Sex Files*. The director has long been fascinated with the razor's edge a straight guy faces when sharing sexuality with his buddies. Just when does it become queer? Tracing that continuum is the primary fun of the *JG Sex Files*.

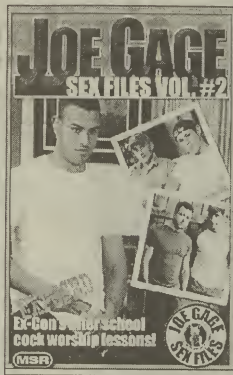
Decidedly not the wham/bang excursions of most porn, the *Sex Files* deal with the dynamics of the moment. Gage's slow-burning eroticism even disarmed my political correctness sensor, which perks up the minute some gay boy impersonates a straight guy only to get fucked crazy a minute later. Gage stretches but never breaks the boundaries of believably straight behavior, while letting us know this is a performance through stylistic experiments that acknowledge the movie's fantasy, and permit us to go along with it.



Karnal Knowledge



The buddies gather in the living room of a working-class neighborhood's small house to drink beer and haul out their dicks while watching het porn. (That chick's incessant moaning gets tiresome awfully quick.) Volume 1, *A Jack-Off Party at Billy Bob's*, features Rhett O'Hara and the utterly impressive York Powers, whose urgent cock-need whips the



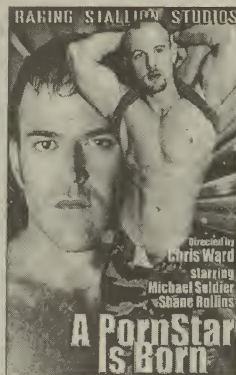
guys into group behavior, with short tastes of cocksucking. Volume 2, *Uncle Pruitt's After-School Cock Worship Lesson*, features

sensationally cocky young Trent Austin and nasty Andrew Addams. Addams patiently eases a reluctant kid into touching his cock, guiding him ultimately to get a taste. Since every group has

a guy willing to go further, Mark Kroner becomes a fearless role model. The other guys shoot covert glances at their buddies' cocks, finally engage eye-contact, and smile. There's tacit permission to stroke another guy's dick. Get a mouth on it. It seems straight guys just need a safely non-homosexual context in which to indulge seemingly homosexual proclivities. Gage promises that Volume 3 will increase the sexual tension even further, with full-on fucking. That sounds harder to pull off. Meanwhile, these well-crafted, highly effective fantasies are bonerific all the way. msrvideos.com; (877) 361-3400.

Cameo turn

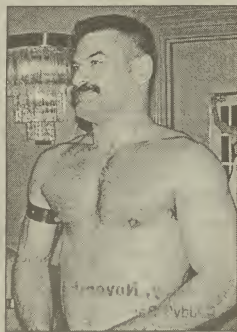
Raging Stallion Studio makes a rare excursion into plotted porn with a big-budget drama, *A Porn Star is Born*. It cleverly riffs on the classic movie without slavishly duplicating its plot. I suppose I should recuse myself from reviewing the movie, as I'm in it. But don't get excited — I'm fully clothed, barely glimpsed as an extra in a bar scene in which the fading star's rock band (local dragband Pepperspray out of face as Mace) plays "Porn is the New Black." I thought an inside view of making porn would be educational. It was fun, and hottie com-



poser/lead guitar Peter Fogel had his shirt off. When the tune was over, the original movie's sad ending was revised, with the crowd cheering as Michael Soldier's not-dead ex-star was re-united with his lover, the delectable Shane Rollins as He Who Is Born.

Director Chris Ward told me that the only reason he made such a heavily scripted movie was because he realized the DVD could provide viewing options that totally skipped the plot scenes. Indeed, the DVD has four edits. Watch the full movie, or only the sex scenes. Break the choices down further to all oral and all anal. So it's enough to say the execution of the story is pretty elaborate and fairly strenuous.

Not, however, the scenes featuring Rollins. Shane's fans won't be disappointed. Besides a three-way which provides ironic counterpoint when Shane's drunken lover indulges a fit of self-pity and jacks off to its video, Shane has a juicy round of flip-flop lovemaking with Soldier. It begins with Shane hopping onto the bed with his legs splayed out like a frog's, fully exposing the marvelous velvet funnel that leads so deep into his ass. Lush cocksucking showcases Shane's heavyweight tool, its broad urethra a girder of stand-up strength. The movie's best sex scene takes place on a yacht cruising San Francisco Bay, with the city's fabulously phallic landmarks framed behind the mesmerizing cocksucking of Michael Brandon and Rollins. Get a load of the eye-popping élan with which the stiff-dicked Shane receives merciless high-velocity lunges during Brandon's fuck. Shane may not have been able to deep throat Michael's Monster, but his deep ass looks like it's giving deep six. Michael's lucky he got that thing back. ragingstallion.com; (877) 327-0707. ▼



Meet Mr. British Columbia Leather Rob Cole, the hunk who captured the title in Vancouver last Saturday night, November 15. He advances to compete at IML next May.

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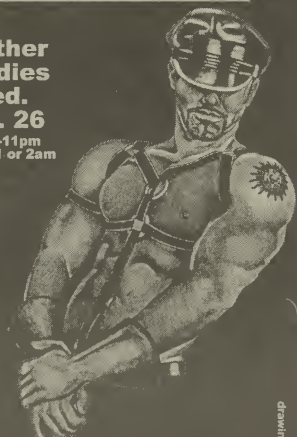
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drawing (c) in smith

Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

fusely for their support of the biggest leather event in the entire USA. Thousands of hours of man and woman hours were expended by dedicated volunteers, not to mention the hard work by the volunteer board of directors. And thousands of people none of us will ever meet will benefit from the generosity of not only local leather people, but leather people from around the world who showed up to support the effort. Is it any wonder that San Francisco is known as "The City that Knows How"?

Dungeon tour returns

A few years ago, a tour of some of San Francisco's most notorious

private dungeons was conceived as a fundraiser. It was so well received, the current SF Leather Daddy, Peter Fiske, has decided a similar tour will take place again as a fundraiser this year.

If you're interested in a private tour, it will cost you \$65 for men (which includes a 15 Association Play Party afterward) and \$50 for women, and takes place on Saturday, November 29.

The tour is limited to only 75 persons transported by bus and includes snacks and dessert as well as wine, beer or water. To register or more information, email pfiske@peoplepc.com.

Remember: For news from columnists all over the US and Canada, up-to-the-minute developments can be found on www.L LeatherPage.com. See you all next week! ▼

OUT ABOUT

Calendar
by Mark Mardon

Chorus of men

It's a pillar, a lotus blossom, a many-headed angelic messenger, a living hymn to peace on Earth and goodwill to everybody. It's the opposite of punk and hip-hop (love them though we may), and the embodiment of everything refined and pure and healing. The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, under the beautifully balanced baton of Artistic Director & Conductor Dr. Kathleen McGuire, sings soaring hosannahs to the heavens with grace, dignity, and exquisite harmonies. In their glorious 25th Anniversary Celebration at Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall last Monday, November 17, the Chorus and orchestra lifted the spirits of a hugely appreciative audience — the cream of San Francisco gay and lesbian society — and proved they are indeed a world-class musical entity, with an especially warm place in their hearts for the City they call home.

Presented by Golden Gate Performing Arts, Inc., with impressive corporate and community sponsorships, the concert "Closer than ever" succeeded both in honoring the Chorus's rich past and in presenting a coherent vision of its future. The impeccably tuxedoed men and orchestra, the epitome of elegance and good taste, welcomed three local heroes to the stage to share in the moment: Donna Sachet in a spectacular silver-and-black sweeping gown, bowing to her "Dancing Queen" fame; Armistead Maupin, who noted his literary alter-ego Michael Tolliver was a member of the Chorus, "and he did all the things I wanted to do. He did my dirty work for me," and the much-beloved chanteuse Sharon McNight in a stunning red outfit with a 15' matching boa, who musically insisted: "Read my lips: No free tricks!"

Original Chorus conductor Dick Kramer took the podium at the end of the concert to lead a rousing "Stout-hearted Men," and long-time Chorus conductor Dr. Stan Hill followed with "Never Ever" from *NakedMan*. Those were inspiring moments, but the future of the Chorus clearly is in the competent hands of current conductor McGuire. The program she presented ranged from devotional pieces (the concert opened with a Mendelssohn-Bartholdy rendition of the Psalm "Thou, Lord, our refuge," followed by an "Alleluia"), to the distinctly literary "Michael's Letter to Mama," a section of David Maddux's *Music for Michael Mouse: Songs & Selected Readings from Tales of the City*. Here Maupin narrated a musical rendition of Michael "Mouse" Tolliver's coming-out letter to his mother, attempting to give her a sense of what it means to be gay. It was potent and deeply moving.

My personal favorite of the night was the powerful, often staccato-like singing on Carl Orff's 13th Century medieval poem "In taberna quando sumus" from *Carmina Burana*. The piece ably demonstrated the group's consummate musicianship.

The Chorus's "Fifth Section" — the many lost to AIDS — no doubt were listening in and smiling with Pride. ▼

Visit the SF Gay Men's Chorus online at www.sfgmc.org



The Kinsey Sicks' Trampolina, Trixie, Rachel and Winnie take over NCTC. See Friday.

Epi

The Kinsey Sicks' 'Oy Vey in a Manger!' @ NCTC

Opening night: The New Conservatory Theatre Center and The Kinsey Sicks, America's Favorite Dragapella Beauty Shop Quartet, present the world premiere of *Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger!*, in which the Kinsey Sicks turn their considerable talents to the global effort to stamp out holiday cheer. *Oy Vey* combines the Kinsey Sicks' award-winning a cappella singing, biting wit and over-the-top drag in a theatrical attempt to answer the age-old Yuletide question: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The show includes the premiere of some hot new Kinsey songs, including newly-minted twisted holiday favorites. The Sicks began in SF in 1993, and soon took over the world. They've packed houses across the US and into Canada, Mexico, Europe and the Caribbean, and were the runaway hit of last year's Montreal "Just for Laughs" Comedy Festival. Original member Ben Schatz ("Rachel") is a Harvard-trained civil rights lawyer, former Director of the national Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, and created the first national AIDS legal project and authored Clinton's HIV policy during the 1992 presidential campaign. Irwin Keller ("Winnie") is a University of Chicago-trained lawyer and linguist and former director of the AIDS Legal Referral Panel of the SF Bay Area. Actor/singer/theatre educator Chris Dilley ("Trampolina") joined the troupe in 1998, and actor/singer/dancer Kevin Smith Kirkwood ("Trixie") signed on in 2002. Come hear "Lusty the Snowman," "God Bless Ye Femmy Lesbians," "A Lay in a Manger," and the new Xmas cuisine standard, "Soylent Night." \$25-\$34. 8pm Wed-Fri; 7:30 & 10pm Sat. Thru Jan 3, 2004. 10th Anniversary Show on Tue, Dec. 30. Special New Year's Eve show Dec. 31. NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. (at Market). Tix/info: 861-8972; www.nctc.org

Sia Amma @ The Center
African comedienne Sia Amma performs her one-woman show, "What Mama Said About Down There," a combination of stand-up comedy and theater, with special guest drummer Mohammed Kouyate. Two evenings (Nov. 21 & 22) of laughter, music, and authentic African food. A benefit for teaching supplies in Liberia, West Africa. \$12-\$15 sliding. 8pm. Rainbow Room, SF LGBT Community Center. Info: 928-4019.

'The Hello Show' @ The Sims Center
Alma Esperanza Cunningham Movement, AIRspace Artist-in-Residence at the Jon Sims Center for the Arts, presents "The Hello Show," a journey into the valley of the dolls, in which Cunningham continues her deconstruction and reconfiguration of the feminine

experience through movement. With both male and female performers taking on the feminine persona, Cunningham deconstructs the feminine body within the context of pop culture. Cunningham has choreographed and danced works in NYC and SF, and since 2000 her works have been seen here at the Cowell Theater, Dance Mission, The LAB, and Venue 9's "WOW" series. \$10-\$12 sliding (NOTAFLOR). 8pm. Tix/info: 554-0402; www.jonsimsctr.org

Spencer Day's 'Arizona Blue' @ The Plush Room

Spencer Day performs his biggest, most dynamic musical venture yet: "Arizona Blue," which he calls "a western love story about returning to one's origin, (which) uses songs about life on the road (both original and interpretations) to take the listener on deep and lush musical journey. I am utilizing the skills of some of the finest musicians in the area and aim to fuse together numerous musical styles (samba, hip hop, country-western and of course, jazz) and instrumentation (steel guitar, cello, piano, drum and bass and electronics) and thus, hopefully elevating the lid of the conventional San Francisco scene! Hope you can make it down!" \$20 with a two drink minimum. 8pm. Also on Nov. 22. The Plush Room in the York Hotel, 940 Sutter St. (near Leavenworth). Tix: 885-2800; www.plushroom.com. Info: spencerday.com

Judy Garland Overdrive @ Studio Z

Special Limited Engagement: Judy Garland Overdrive (JGO) presents "No Place Like Pink." This bunch of over-stimulated Bay Area lads decided to take the legend of the Dark Side of Oz and turn it on its head. JGO sliced and diced and exploded the legend, and rearranged it into a brand new legend. It's all of Dark Side of the Moon and much of Wizard of Oz and a lot more. \$20 adv; \$25 door. 7pm. Also on Nov. 22. Studio Z, 314 11th St. Info: 252-7100; www.studioz.tv; www.judygarlandoverdrive.com

'Dykes on Mykes' @ Club Savoy, Santa Rosa

Bay Area Lesbian Musicians (LesJam@yahoo.com) and Starrose Productions present "Dykes on Mykes — Women's Music Showcase Extravaganza!" This month featuring the melodic stylings of Jess Brown (an eclectic blending of folk and progressive rock with melodic vocal harmonies and the occasional jazzy riff; www.jessbrown.com), the sweet Celtic sounds of Adria (ambient blend of traditional and modern; www.adriamusic.com), and the all-country grooves of the Michelle Tanner Group (www.mitchelletanner.com). This is an LGBT venue, but all gay-friendly folk are welcome. No cover charge (\$5-10 suggested donation) 8:30 p.m. Club Savoy, 3546 Flora Vista Ave. Santa Clara. Info: (408) 244-6909; www.clubsavoy.com

'Queer Underwater Cabaret' @ 40th St. Warehouse, Oakland

"Queer Underwater Cabaret," a fabulously sleazy evening to benefit queer fire victims. Come in your hottest water drag to put out the fire. Featuring members of Veronica Lipploss, Mattilda (aka Matthew Bernstein-Sycamore), Urban Hermit, PartyLine, Questinatrix and the Holy Roller Girl, Creamy Goodness, the flowering willies, the Dishwater Deviants, Frognudo & Maria Dawn Smith, MC Maybeline Danger, DJs Reaganomix and Criminal Lethal. Vegan treats and Bingo! Trashy prizes. \$3-\$10 sliding. \$1 w/ a drag donation (wigs, heels, makeup, sex toys, etc.). 7-8 pm. 379 40th St. Warehouse (btwn Telegraph & Broadway), Oakland

'A Streetcar Named Desire' @ Theatre Rhino Studio

UStickEm Productions and Theatre Rhinoceros present Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, directed by J. Grindle and M. Murphy. Following the success of their alternatively gendered production *Fool for Love* in the Rhino studio last summer, Grindle and Murphy return with this classic tale of lust, power and insanity in a sexually charged depiction with a unique perspective. \$15 (\$10 senior; \$5 student w/ID). 8:30pm Fri & Sat; 3:30 & 7:30pm Sun. 2926 16th St. Tix: 861-5079; www.therhino.org

Sat

'Crooked' @ Jon Sims Center

"Crooked," a solo show of dance, drag, clowning, singing, x-rays, poetry, character dialogues, and shedding clothes. Created and performed by Seeley Quest, an Oakland singer, choreographer, stripper, clown, writer, performance artist and organizer. Can crooked physical, mental, sexual and gendered experience be understood in relationship? This heady tangle of desire, inheritance, embodiment, deviance, crip and trans space will make you sweat. Includes a visual art display. 8 pm. 1519 Mission St. Tix/info: 554-0402; www.jonsimsctr.org

GAPA's 'G: 2004' @ Nirvana Restaurant

The Gay Asian Pacific Alliance (GAPA) holds a special Calendar Release Party for G: 2004 Taking Control, a standard-sized calendar featuring more than 25 Asian models. The calendar, produced by an all-volunteer crew and amateur models, combines the creative visions of queer Asian Pacific Islander (API) photographers L. Wayne Chin, Eric Herbas, dannydan and Arthur Ly. Artistic direction by SF artist Sony Atmadajaja. The 2004 calendar depicts queer APIs interacting, versus the oft-seen cold/stark solitary images of Asian men. G: 2004 is meant to be a healthy expression of API identity and sexuality that is not



Suppositori Spelling relinquishes her crown at the Miss Trannyshack Pageant at City Nights. See Sunday.

often seen or available in the mainstream gay media. Calendar sales proceeds will go directly to GAPA's cultural, political and social outreach programs. There is no charge for attending this event, and it is open to everyone. 3-6pm. Nirvana Restaurant, 544 Castro St. (at 18th St). Info: www.gapa.org

'Christmas With The Crawlwads' @ Theatre Rhinoceros

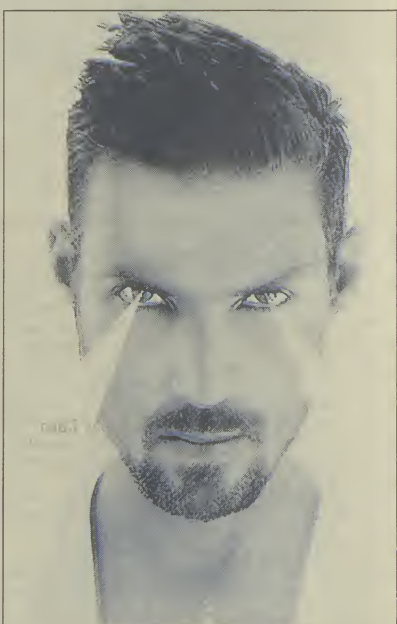
Opening night: Theatre Rhinoceros and Artful Circle Theatre present *Christmas With The Crawlwads*. Starring Hedda Lettuce as Joan Crawford. Created by Richard Winchester. Written by Mark Sargent. Directed by Donita Drake. It's Christmas Eve, 1944. Joan has recently been "fired" from MGM, and is looking forward to the live radio broadcast from her Brentwood mansion, to be hosted by her friend & gossip monger, Hedda Hopper. Starring David Bicha, Mark Enza, Trauma Flintstone, Matthew Martin, Mark Sargent, Tom Shaw, Nikki Star and Drew Todd. \$15-\$25. Show runs Nov. 20-Jan. 3. Opening Nights: Sat. Nov. 22 & Sun. Nov. 23. Showtimes: Wed.-Sat. at 8pm; Sun. eves at 7pm; Sun. mats at 4pm (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21 & 28). No performances on Thanksgiving (11/27), Xmas Day (12/25) and New Year's Eve (12/31). The show on Fri. 11/28 will start at 8:30pm. Straight Night Out: Thurs. Dec. 11 at 8pm. The Rhino, 2926 16th St. (Mission & So. Van Ness). Tix/info: 861-5079; www.therhino.org

Tim Miller's 'Spilt Milk' @ New College of California

The Experimental Performance Institute (EPI) at New College of California presents: "Spilt Milk" by solo performance artist and Master Artist in Residence Tim Miller. This performance will be in honor of Harvey Milk and his legacy as it has lived and breathed through Miller's performances over the years. Gathering new performance material and sections from Miller's earlier work, "Spilt Milk" jumps off from a moment as a teenager when Miller hitchhikes north to the Bay Area to be part of the new world Harvey Milk was creating in San Francisco. "Spilt Milk" charts the pleasures and pitfalls of a queer life lived in engagement with desire and justice. \$12-15 sliding. Two shows: 7pm and 8:30pm. New College Theater, 777 Valencia street at 18th St. Tix: 437-3487.

Thriving in SF + QComedy @ The Center

Thriving in SF (an HIV support group) and QComedy present "Homemade Pasta Dinner And Live Comedy," a LGBT Community Center kickoff event. Featuring comedians Nick Leonard, Pippi Lovestocking and Dana Cory. Dinner includes spaghetti with meat or veggie sauce, bread, salad, dessert and drinks. Suggested Door Charge \$10. 6-9pm. In the Rainbow Room and outdoor balcony terrace at the LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market (at Octavia).



Robbie D creates an electro-clash cabaret in 'UNISEXY' at The Make-Out Room. See Thursday.

'Celebration of Craftswomen'

@ Fort Mason Center
The Women's Building presents "Celebration of Craftswomen," the largest women's fine crafts fair in the nation. Now in its 25th year, the retail fair will showcase the latest innovative work by more than 300 of the nation's leading women artists over two consecutive weekends. Meet and buy direct from over 150 artists. Plus live music, comedy and dance, gourmet food and drink, a silent auction, and benefit raffle. \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and free for children under twelve. A two-day pass is \$10. November 22-23 and 29-30, from 10am-6pm. Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center. Info: 383-3470; www.teamproevent.com.

'Craft Showcase 4'**@ Museum of Craft & Folk Art, Ft. Mason**

The Museum of Craft & Folk Art (MOCFA) presents "Craft Showcase 4," featuring one-of-a-kind works in glass, clay, enamel, metal, wood and fiber. View more than 300 individual works of art from 60 members of California's crafts community. Curated by Kathleen Hanna. All items for sale, including small gift items such as glass vases and turned-wood bowls priced \$25-\$100; jewelry pieces and ceramic vessels from \$75-\$250; and handcrafted furniture and large-scale sculpture from \$200-\$15,000. Admission is free. 11am-6pm Tue-Fri; 10am-6pm Sat; 11am-5pm Sun & Mon. Fort Mason Center, Landmark Bld. A (Buchanan St. & Marina Blvd.). Info: www.mocfa.org

'Real Pigs for Under One Roof'**@ Eagle Tavern**

Michael Brandon and Empress Snatch present "Real Pigs for Under One Roof," featuring The Men of Raging Stallion Studios, a fundraiser for Under One Roof, a volunteer organization that raises unrestricted funds for 42 AIDS service organizations in the Bay Area. Enjoy a beer bust and porn-DVD sale as Brandon is joined by Will Clark and Rik Janner. Empress Snatch lends her inebriated presence, and Mama takes the stage with one of her point-accuracy whips. Lenny Broberg serves as guest auctioneer. 8-11pm. 398 12th St. Info: 626-0880.

'Score!' @ Club 220

Don Soradind presents the late-night/early-morning dance club "Score!" with DJs Gryder & Hughes and guest DJs on both the main dance floor and Steve Mercado downstairs in the dungeon. Tonight is "Underwear Party" featuring porn stars Michael Brandon, Rik Hammer and Will Clark plus upstairs VIP Lounge hosted by Donna Sachet! Help raise money for Under One Roof. \$10 b4 2am; \$15 after. Nearby off-street parking \$5. 18+ w/ID. 220 Jones St. (at Turk). Info: www.scorebig.net

Syn 23**8th Annual Miss Transnashack Pageant @ City Nights**

What a long way the Miss Transnashack Pageant has come! Having long outgrown its humble beginnings at the Stud Bar, the annual pageant moved several years ago to its present location at the more spacious City Nights. And what used to be simply an amped-up version of Transnashack has morphed into one of the biggest productions this town has seen since... well... since a Fischer-spencer concert! We're talking choreographed dance numbers, video projections, set pieces, and a supporting cast of local drag luminaries helping each contestant in their hopes of achieving the much-sought-after title of "Miss Transnashack." The girls really go all out, and it shows. The Miss Transnashack pageant is unique in that it's perhaps the only drag competition in the world that accepts contestants of any and all genders. Drag queens compete with faux queens compete with gender-queers. The only thing that matters is who is the most fierce! Heikina will share her hosting duties for the evening with Juanita Morel and Pippi Lovestocking. DJ Pinky Ring spins before and after the pageant. Doors at 8:30pm, pageant begins at 10pm. \$15 advance tickets available at Body, 450 Castro and Costumes on Haight, 735 Haight. \$20 at the door. 715 Harrison St. @ 3rd. Info: 263-0980; heikina.com



Tim Miller reflects on San Francisco's gay revolution in "Spilt Milk." See Saturday.

Brazilian Tango Concert @ Church of St. John

The Latin American Chamber Music Society perform "From Rio de Janeiro to San Francisco: A Concert of Brazilian Tango." Dedicated to the music of Ernesto Nazareth, the great Brazilian tango composer. Instruments will include organ, harpsichord and classical guitar. \$10. 7:30pm. Church of St. John the Evangelist, 1661 15th St. (at Julian). Info: 861-1436.

'Fire in Heaven' @ YBCA

Ghost Festival 3 at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater presents "Fire in Heaven," a new storytelling performance work by Brenda Wong Aoki, Mark Izu, and renowned storyteller Gayle Ross (granddaughter of Chief John Ross, who led the Cherokee Nation on the legendary "Trail of Tears"). Mixing American jazz, Japanese Shinto water blessings (mizuko), Native American chanting, and storytelling, "Fire in Heaven" explores the connections between Asians and Native Americans. Experience mythic, deep-seated tales that propel and perpetuate innate wisdom through the generations. \$15-\$25. Two shows: 2pm & 7pm. 701 Howard St. Tix: 978-ARTS (2787).

SF Hiking Club @ Tamales Point

Join other outdoors lovers for a Tamales Point hike. Enjoy seeing Pacific breakers battering the granite tip of the peninsula, and perhaps the Tule Elk herd. Moderate 9-10 mile hike with 1,000-ft. elevation gain. Meet 8:45am under the large Safeway sign at Market & Dolores Streets. Info: 487-6410; www.sfhiking.com

'Wicked Messenger' @ El Rio

Calling all Variants! Frankie Tenderloin & Sherilyn Connelly host "Wicked Messenger," a 21st-century kabaret. Featuring dragcore heart-throbs Frankie Tenderloin & the Rent Boys, prose stylist Sherilyn Connelly, homo-hop hunk Katakstrope, drag king junior UB Mackin, recovering slam poet Lauren Wheeler, cyberpunk godfather John Shirley reading from his new novel *Crawlers*, sizzling Burlesque by The Diamond Daggers, spoken word/DD Horehound Stillpoint, and legendary DJ Alvin a-go-go! Plus an open mike! \$5-\$7 sliding (NOTAFLOF). 7pm doors; 8pm show. At El Rio, 3158 Mission St.

Mon 24**Ray Ferrer as Coco Lopez @ 'QComedy'**

QComedy presents "Monday Night Gay Comedy" at The Center, this week hosted by Ray Ferrer as Coco Lopez, with comedians Betsy Salikind, Adam Sander, Lisa Geduldig, Bob Douglas, Shanique Scott, Tom Smith, and Bridget Schwartz. \$8-\$15 sliding (NOTAFLOF). 7:30pm doors; 8pm show. SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St. (at Octavia). Info: www.Qcomedy.com. Tix: 865-5633; www.harveymilk.org.

Tue 25**Craig Rubano @ The Plush Room**

Opening night: Broadway vocalist Craig Rubano returns to San Francisco for a two-week engagement at the Plush Room. Rubano's "Finishing the Act" is his paean to Broadway's Act One Finales, focusing on what he calls "a very important slot in a Broadway musical, when the show's plot has usually reached a turning point and, with the finale lingering in the audience member's mind, the intermission affords a rare opportunity for reflections. These songs are almost always about hope — even hope dashed."

\$25 plus two-drink minimum. 8pm (3pm Sun). Thru Dec. 7 (no performance Thanksgiving Day). York Hotel, 940 Sutter St. (btwn Leavenworth & Hyde). Tix: 885-2800.

'Trannysnack' @ The Stud

All hail the Supreme Being who is the newly crowned Miss Transnashack 2003 as she greets her adoring public... who will it be? Your cordial hostess Heikina will be on hand along with Door Mistress Chocolate, DJ Pinky Ring, and all the gang. Show at midnight, \$6 cover 399 9th St. (at Harrison). Info: heikina.com

Wed 26 Thu 27**'Wreaths for the Arts' @ NCTC**

The New Conservatory Theatre Center will hold its third "Wreaths for the Arts," a fundraising sale of wreaths designed and decorated by national and local celebrities, public officials, designers and NCTC Conservatory students to benefit NCTC's YouthAware Programs and Conservatory scholarships. The wreaths will be hung on public display in the lobby Nov 26-Dec 21, and sale prices will range from \$50-\$500. In past years, celebrities who have donated wreaths include Robby & Marsha Williams, Julie Harris, Annette Bening, Terrence McNally, Lynn Redgrave, Danny Pintauro, and Kevin Klein; designers have included Podesta Balducci Designs, Bredwell Meyer Florists, and Flor Designs. Several wreaths will be featured on the set of the Kinsey Sicks show, and one celebrity wreath will be auctioned by them during the run of their show. Selected wreaths will be available for sale and auction on eBay; log onto www.nctc.org and follow link to eBay (starting Nov 26). NCTC is located at 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market). To donate or sponsor a wreath with a monetary contribution, call Development Director Barbara Cohn at NCTC, 861-4914.

'Butterballs' @ The Rawhide

Lu Read/DragStrip presents "Butterballs," a night of Delicious DJs, Debaucherous Dancing, and Eccentric Entertainment hosted by Fudgie Frotlage, starring Tammie Flinstone, pogo striptease artist Mr. Roky Roulette, and DJs Lewis

(progressive house, techno and funky breaks), Don Baird (greasy, balls-to-the-wall, not-dickies, plymouth fagrock), Stef Phillips (rock, punk, funk, '70s, '80s, new wave, no wave, glam and whatever the f*ck she wants). Two dance floors, heated roof deck (smoking OK), go-go dancers. \$6-\$10. 10pm-2am. 280 7th St. (at Folsom). Info: DragStrip Hotline, 282-5378

'Remembering Harvey' @ The Center

Remembering Harvey: personal close-ups. Visuals narrated by Dan Nicoletta and cooperation with special guests. When Dan White assassinated SF Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk 25 years ago, it was up close and personal. Today some of Harvey's friends offer personal close-ups of his remarkable life. Photographer Dan Nicoletta, who worked in Harvey's Castro Camera store, will show slides of his images and share stories of Harvey throughout the 70s. Community reception at 5pm; 6pm slide show presentation, Q&A session, and conversations with some of Harvey's friends about how his life and death impacted them personally. Attendees encouraged to share their stories as well. Free admission for Center members; guests welcome. Donations accepted (NOTAFLOF). 5pm. SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St. (at Octavia). Info: 865-5555; gayfix@yahoo.com.

'UNISEXY' @ Make-Out Room

Recording/performance artist DJ Robbie D performs at "UNISEXY," an evening of twisted electro-cabaret by the DJ who helped create and make "Trannysnack" the super hit it still is. Songs will include new singles by his female alter ego, Jer Ber Jones ("Spell Out"), and singles for his newest CD, *Robby D.Oily*, a tribute to Dolly Parton. Show begins at 11pm and includes dancing till 2am with DJs Chicken and Johnny Kat. Mormon spawn Robbie of Great Lake City, Utah, now an LA resident, created the international underground hit "Lotion" that appears on Larry Tee's *Electroclash* compilation out of NYC. Robbie has worked with producers Matmos, Jello Biafra and Larry Mullens, and was performance artist Rachel Rosenthal's apprentice for five years. He was also Susanne Bartsch's resident DJ in NYC. \$5. Doors open 10pm. 3225 22nd St. Info: www.robbyd.com

WANNA SUBMIT?

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Oscar Wilde's last performance

Uncensored transcripts of his famous, ill-fated trial

by Jim Nawrocki

The Real Trial of Oscar Wilde: The First Uncensored Transcript of the Trial of Oscar Wilde vs. John Douglas (Marquess of Queensberry), 1895, edited by Merlin Holland; Fourth Estate, \$27.95

Though there have been many books about the 1895 scandal involving Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred "Bosie" Douglas, and partial accounts of the ensuing legal proceedings, there has never been a complete transcript of the trials until now. Merlin Holland, Wilde's grandson, notes in a lengthy introduction to the book that the longhand transcript was found in 2000 during preparations for the British Library's observance of the centenary of Wilde's death. This edition presents that transcript, plus that of a preliminary hearing. It also includes reproductions of key documents, photographs of the principal players, and caricatures and illustrations from press coverage of the affair.

Wilde had already achieved fame as a dramatist and novelist by the time he met Douglas, and his trial (for violation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which forbade indecent conduct between men) reads much like drama. In this case, it's tragic

farce. In his brief foreword, Sir John Mortimer describes the whole affair as "a deliberate exercise in self destruction." Reading over the facts of the case, it's difficult to come to any other conclusion.

Wilde initiated a libel suit against Douglas' father, the Marquess of Queensbury, after the latter left a note for Wilde at his club, addressed to "Oscar Wilde, posing sodomite." But it was Wilde's conduct as a witness, and the evidence uncovered by the defense team during the trial, that led to Wilde's arrest and imprisonment.

Holland's introduction presents a useful summary of the sequence of events that led to his grandfather's undoing. As a family member, he also offers significant insight into the effect that the scandal had on Wilde's wife, Constance, and their two sons, Cyril and Vyvyan (Merlin's father). For all concerned, the story is a heartbreaking one.

Constant support

Holland maintains that Constance saw nothing amiss in the relationship between her husband and his handsome young male friend. She was, after all, used to seeing her successful husband enjoy the attentions of his admirers. Although Wilde's lies were his undoing, his wife, true to her name, remained supportive of him. The scandal, of course,

brought great pain to her and their children. That being said, Holland praises his grandfather as a rebel who stood up to "the hypocrisy of those social, sexual and literary values upon which Victorian society was so firmly based."

For those who enjoy Wilde's wit, there are many examples of it throughout the transcript. From the very start, Wilde is Wilde. "Are you a dramatist and author?" asks Charles Humphreys, who is examining him. "I believe I am well-known as a dramatist and author," retorts Wilde ("loftily," according to the transcript). This provokes a sharp rebuke from the magistrate. In another instance, Wilde is cross-examined by Edward Car-

son about his drinking habits. "Was it a favourite drink — iced champagne?" asks Carson.

"Yes, strongly against my doctor's orders," answers Wilde.

"Never mind your doctor's orders!" retorts Carson.

"I don't," quips Wilde. "It has all the more flavour if you discard the doctor's orders."

Though the gallery was charmed by Wilde's performance, the Crown was not. Wilde dropped his libel case against Queensberry, but the damage had been done. Damning evidence against Wilde, no doubt eagerly supplied by Queensberry, prompted his arrest, trial, and conviction under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. This transcript pro-



vides, for the first time, insight into the many tactical errors and other factors that worked against Wilde. It is also an intriguing and disturbing depiction of Victorian attitudes toward homosexuality, and a sad chapter in the life of a great writer. ▼

Wilde's grandson

◀ Arts cover

voice. Holland, who once sold paper to Arabs and later imported ceramics, before becoming a Wilde expert, continued, "The point of it would have been not only for Oscar, but also for his mother and his father, because both of them were extraordinary people in the history of Ireland in their own way. It would have been a question of putting the Wilde family name back on the map. I did think about it quite seriously. My son was going to be 21, my book of Wilde's collected letters was out already, and I possibly could have said, 'All right, That's it! I'm going to stop writing about him. I'm going to move on and do other things.' Nobody then could have accused me of trying to cash in on the name."

"Then I mulled it over," Holland noted, "and I thought perhaps if I'd been living in the States and I'd been American, I might have done it. People would have just slapped me on the back and said, 'Good for you,' and then forgotten about it. But the English are snipers by nature. I just thought all I'm going to do if I do change the name back is to build up a whole lot of trouble for myself. People are going to bicker about it behind my back, and do I really want that? I thought it would be lovely to have the name back, but perhaps I have to admit that I didn't really have the courage to do it. Nothing to do with Oscar, but I've lived as Holland all my life, and my dad was called Holland, and my son's called Holland. Do I really want to change my identity? I said to someone the other day, if there is a time to do it, it will be on my deathbed, leaving everybody else to pick up the pieces."

Prosecuting Wilde

Moving back to the book, I wondered aloud what was so special about the edition. After all, previous transcripts had been published over the years.

"Oh, I worked it out to about 28,000 words in previous editions of that first trial, and we've now got 85,000," Holland proudly recounted. "It's nearly three times as long as anything we've ever had before. The new material will be fascinating for the Wilde buffs, the lawyers, and the students of psychology. Looking at the way which [Queensberry's lawyer] Edward Carson conducts his defense, what it ultimately amounts



Asked if he kissed a boy, Wilde replied, 'No, he was far too ugly.'

to is almost a prosecution of Wilde. When you see how aggressively Carson cross-examines my grandfather, one can be forgiven for believing that this is actually the trial of Wilde himself.

"This has never really come out with that strength before. The previous editions have been edited down to more or less the bare facts. For example, Oscar gets much more rattled much earlier than that famous occasion when he's asked did he kiss that boy, and Oscar replies, 'No, he was far too ugly.' This is, of course, the great turning point in the whole story. But before that, there are several exchanges with Carson where Carson really goes at him, and Oscar actually appeals once to his counselor and once to the judge even, saying, 'Do I have to be continually put under this pressure of cross-examination when I've given you my answer?'"

"With this new transcript," Holland added, "the whole thing comes alive. Previously it was like only having black-and-white pho-

duction stills. Suddenly, we've got the full Dolby sound, widescreen, Technicolor version. It's there, and it lives. People have said to me to read it as a play, and it's laid out like a play, it's gripping. It's exciting. It's depressing. It's awful to see how Oscar, off his guard, suddenly basically talks himself into prison. There are other bits in there which were left out earlier: a whole examination of Oscar's views on the French writer Huysmans, which was just five lines in square brackets in previous versions, and it's now 1,500 words. His views on French art and literature. There is much more on a couple, Alfonso Conway and Edward Shelley, amongst the rent boys. In the end, it's almost as good as having a tape-recording of the trials."

But most important, the transcript and Holland's commentary prove that although Wilde did not go into court to be a gay martyr, by the end he accepted his fate, and he did indeed proudly take on that mantle. ▼

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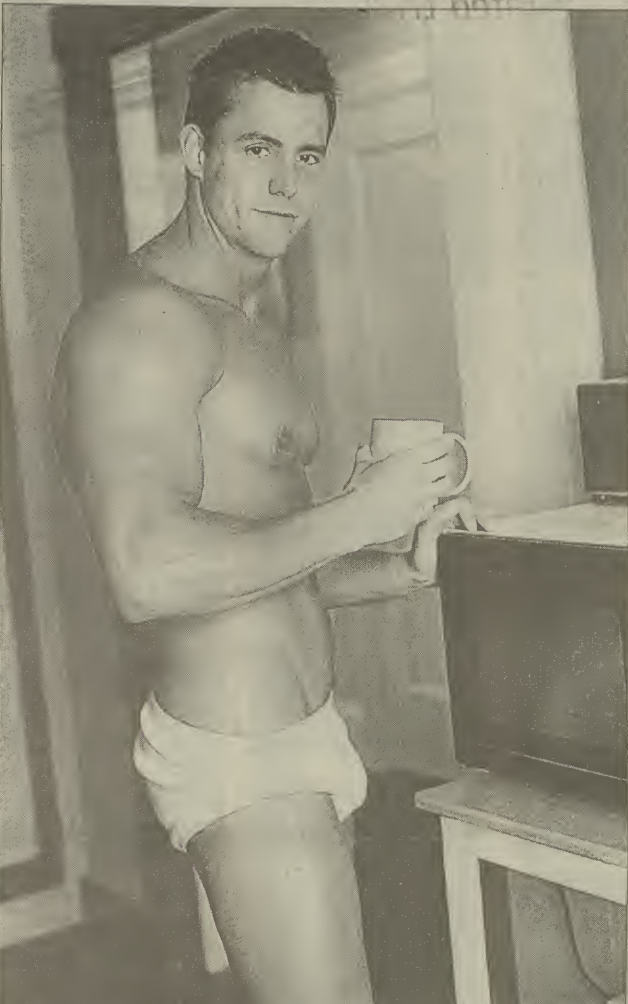
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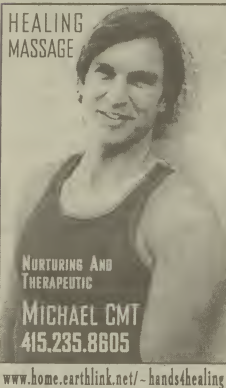
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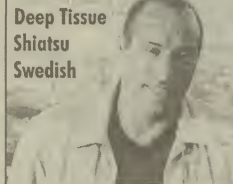
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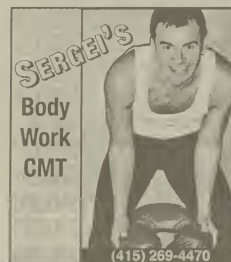
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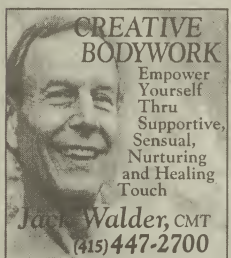
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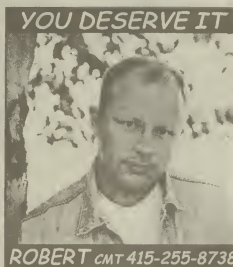
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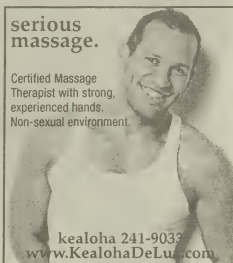


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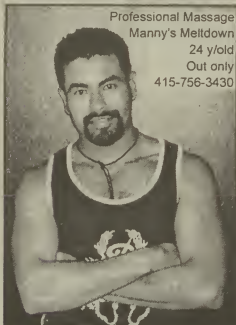
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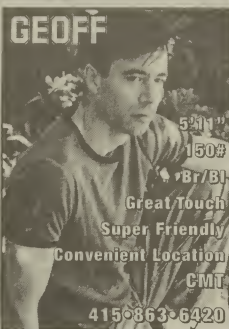
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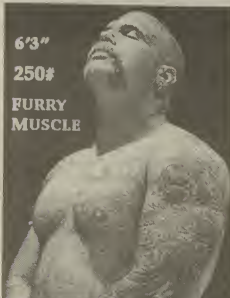
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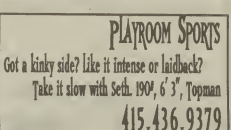
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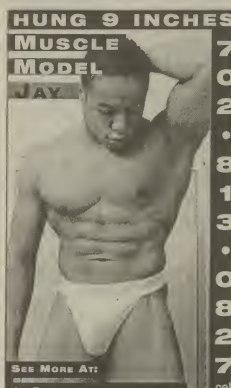
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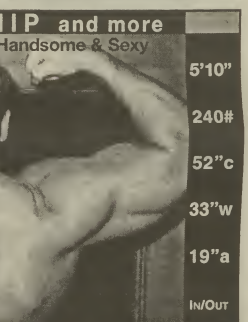
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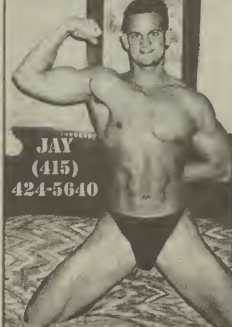
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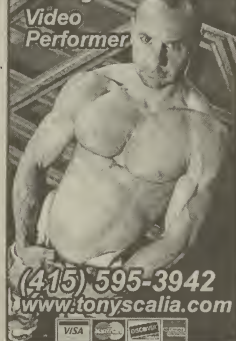
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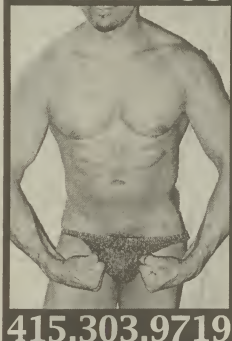
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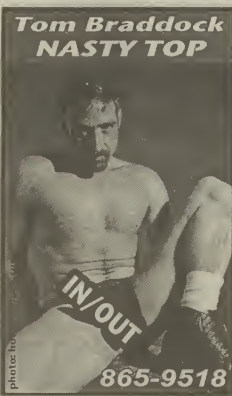
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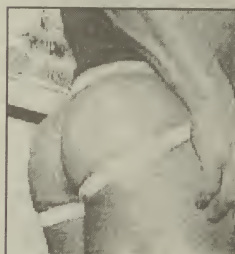
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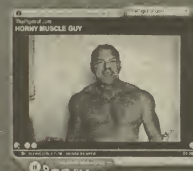
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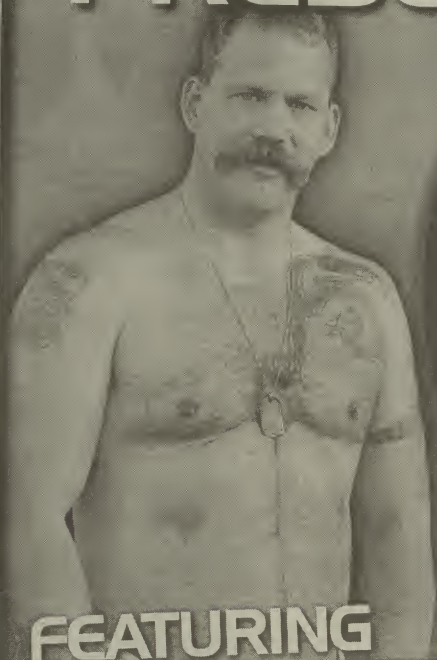


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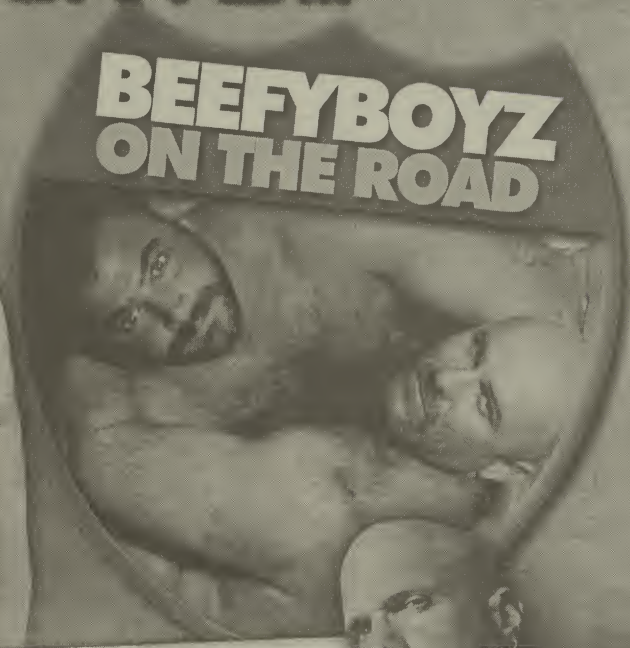
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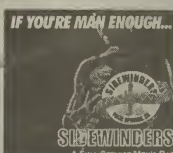
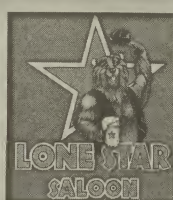
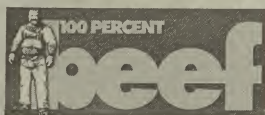
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